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U.S. POLICY TOWARD NICARAGUA: AID TO NICARAGUAN RESISTANCE PROPOSAL

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
UNITED STATES SENATE

NINETY-NINTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

ON

U.S. POLICY TOWARD NICARAGUA: AID TO NICARAGUAN RESISTANCE PROPOSAL

FEBRUARY 27 AND MARCH 4, 1986

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U.S. POLICY TOWARD NICARAGUA: AID TO NICARAGUAN RESISTANCE PROPOSAL

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1986

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met at 2:03 p.m., in room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Richard G. Lugar (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Lugar, Helms, Kassebaum, Pressler, Trible, Evans, Pell, Biden, Sarbanes, Cranston, Dodd, and Kerry.

The CHAIRMAN. This hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee is called to order.

The important question of aid to the armed resistance in Nicaragua is again before the Senate. This issue has been widely debated in both Houses of Congress and among the general public over the course of the last few years. It is, therefore, an issue on which I sense distinct limits in trying to enlighten my colleagues in these brief introductory remarks. I do, however, have some views on how the Senate should be thinking about this difficult problem.

Our first priority should be to set out our objectives clearly. Only then can we deliberate effectively on the obstacles, risks, and means that must be taken into account in devising a policy to attain our goals.

Ironically, in view of all of the controversy that has attended this question, I believe the basic objective of all of us is the same. We want to see a democratic, prosperous and united Nicaragua that is at peace with its neighbors and enjoys good relations with the United States. We want to be on the side of democracy and development in Central America, and we want to see the security interests of the nations of that region, as well as our own security interests, firmly protected.

Only a democratic and peaceful Nicaragua can guarantee its own security and the protection of the interests and the realization of the ideals which we share with the peoples of Central America.

The Nicaraguan question is a difficult one, for policymakers and the American public alike. We, who have been supportive of the administration's policy, should be attentive to the arguments of its critics. They have argued that this type of involvement in Nicaragua is a dubious proposition morally and practically. They have pointed out defects in the forces we have supported and in the means by which we have supported them.

It has been argued that the armed opposition cannot win and that the dynamics of the administration's policy could lead to more direct U.S. involvement.

Finally, they have held that the provision of assistance to the armed opposition undermines possibilities of alternative political solutions to which the administration should pay more attention.

We ought to be appreciative of these legitimate concerns in framing a policy toward Nicaragua capable of achieving our mutual goals.

The critics, however, should be understanding of the arguments on the other side. Abandonment of the forces opposed to the present regime in Managua may lead straight to the institutionalization of a one-party Marxist dictatorship that would crush all hopes of democracy in that country. It may result in a permanent military and subversive threat that would make democracy and development impossible in the region and threaten the security interests of the United States.

This could well lead to a situation in which direct U.S. involvement is more probable than under the course proposed by the administration.

Continued support to the armed opposition could help the prospects for a negotiated settlement—and may, indeed, be indispensable in that regard. And could it not be seen as immoral as well to abandon the democratic elements of Nicaragua to a permanent dictatorship, which none of us would tolerate if we were Nicaraguan citizens?

As a nation, we need to get behind a practical and realistic program that has as its objective full freedom and democratic elections in Nicaragua. Although it is ultimately the responsibility of the people of the country of Nicaragua, we know from events of recent weeks that a united American approach can accomplish a great deal.

The case of Nicaragua will be a difficult one. We have seen enough of the Sandinistas to know that democracy, as we understand it, is not their ideal. They have shown that they will use strong, as well as subtle, methods to cling to their monopoly on power in that country, and they are strongly supported by antidemocratic forces from abroad.

At this point, it is not enough for someone to say that he supports democracy in Nicaragua. Realism impels us to appreciate that it will take pressure, both from the Nicaraguan people and from abroad, to make the Sandinistas recall their past commitments to fellow Nicaraguans.

It is up to us in Congress to help the administration craft an appropriate combination of pressures that makes sense and can be successful. Involvement of this type always carries risk, and this must be frankly acknowledged. But exaggerated fear of involvement precludes success and can compromise both our ideals and our interests.

What are the forces of democracy in Central America to think when the Soviet bloc is pumping $4 to $5 billion a year to sustain an authoritarian and aggressive government in Cuba, and now about half a billion a year to Nicaragua, while we have difficulty

maintaining our commitment to $1.2 billion annually to Central America under the Jackson-Kissinger plan?

The bottom line is that we and the people of Central America must ask and require no more of the present Nicaraguan Government than was asked of Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, or of the Philippines—political and religious freedom and free and fair democratic elections as the indispensable basis for peace and development.

An American Congress and people united behind a policy aimed toward this objective would be a great help in its achievement.

The administration has a proposal that it believes will lead to that end. My colleagues will have questions and suggestions regarding that approach.

We are privileged to have with us today one of the chief architects of this initiative who will also be an effective spokesman on its behalf. But before I introduce the Secretary of State, I would like to call upon my distinguished colleague, Senator Claiborne Pell, for an opening statement.

Senator PELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I join you in welcoming Secretary Shultz here today and congratulate you, Mr. Secretary and the administration on the tremendous way, the excellent way, you have handled the Filipino situation.

We are here, though, today to discuss the administration's new proposal for assistance to the Contras. Here I have very real concern that we are setting ourselves up for a repeat of the disastrous situation that we fostered by our intervention in Guatemala in the 1950's.

We remember that our direct backing of elements opposed to a left of center government there left a legacy of over three decades of domination, for the most part of harsh, inhumane, military rule, under which terrible atrocities and other abuses of human rights occurred. The recent election of President Cerezo gave, we trust, the coup de grace to that type of regime.

I, too, vividly see disturbing paralliels in the situation today, whereby we are supporting an armed opposition, led by members of Somoza's National Guard, who were responsible for inhumane treatment of their people then and who are still doing it today.

Moreover, the Contras are still brutally committing human rights violations, according to Amnesty International and other respectable organizations that have taken testimony from witnesses.

If the definition of terrorism is the seeking by violent, indiscriminate action to affect the policy of or to overturn a government, then, in effect, the Contras are our terrorists carrying out such a strategy. A Contra victory with these people in power I believe would condemn Nicaragua not only to emulate the Guatemala experience but also to relive the Somoza era. I, for one, do not believe that we should condemn the Nicaraguan people to that fate.

At this point, Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to insert in the record an article that appeared in the current Princeton Alumni Weekly on this subject.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection, it is so ordered.

[See appendix.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Pell.

Senator Kassebaum, do you have any opening comment?

Senator KASSEBAUM. No, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Cranston?

Senator CRANSTON. Yes, I have one. Thank you.

First, I want to join in welcoming Secretary Shultz. He deserves great commendation for his professional handling of the tense situation in the Philippines.

I believe the State Department had one of its finest hours as it worked with different parties toward a successful conclusion of that unfolding drama.

I want also to commend, in particular, Ambassadors Bosworth and Wolfowitz for their very outstanding work.

Now, to Nicaragua.

The United States has been supporting the Contra effort for more than 4 years now. Our government has nurtured it, we have orchestrated it, we have manipulated it.

What do we have to show for these efforts? Have the Contras seized and held one square foot of Nicaraguan soil? Have the Contras spurred an increase in press and religious freedoms inside Nicaragua? Have they weakened the popular base of support for the Marxist Sandinista regime or reduced its reliance on Moscow? No.

The Contras have accomplished none of these goals. There has been no groundswell of popular support for the Contras from the Nicaraguan people. By any dispassionate analysis, the Contra effort has failed to achieve its stated objectives.

What are the costs of the program—not simply budgetary costs, but costs to American prestige abroad?

At the same time that we in Washington are working on a united effort to combat terrorism around the world, the administration is funding men who perpetrate acts of international terrorism in our own hemisphere. Through the Contra program, the American taxpayer is bankrolling a mixed bag of thugs, mercenaries, former Somocistas and disaffected Sandinistas who are trying to terrorize the Nicaraguan people into taking up arms against their Government.

United States funds have been used to underwrite such missions as the bombing of commercial oilfields and the civilian airport at Managua, the mining of Nicaraguan harbors, the impressment of numbers of Nicaraguan peasants into the Contra ranks, and the indiscriminate murder of unarmed civilians.

Meanwhile, the volume of CIA money flooding Costa Rica and Honduras is corrupting those democracies, buying politicians, and silencing journalists who question the Contra presence in their countries.

We hear administration assertions that the Contra effort will succeed if only we grant a four-fold increase in funding. But this is the same flawed argument we heard through 10 years of ever-escalating war in Vietnam, and throughout Southeast Asia.

The Contras are not failing due to a lack of funds.

In an unclassified briefing the General Accounting Office gave our committee staff this week, it was conceded that less than $10 million of the $27 million authorized to aid the Contras in fiscal

1986, barely one-third, has been spent, and that less than $18 million has even been obligated.

Persistent press reports indicate that the Contras remain hunkered down in foreign camps, their numbers dwindling, not increasing. The Contras continue to lack popular support. We have seen none of the backing granted elsewhere to the anti-Duvalier or anti-Marcos forces.

It would be great if we could achieve democracy in Nicaragua. We all want that. I totally reject the reprehensible system of government devised by the Marxists in Managua. But if the administration truly believes that the Sandinistas are a threat to our national security, why doesn't the administration just come out and say that its objective is a military overthrow of the Sandinista regime?

The reason, I suspect, is that the Contra effort is woefully inadequate to achieve this task and because the American people quite rightly reject the idea that U.S. military force should be employed indiscriminately to make foreign governments in our own image.

So, how do we deal with a government which we deplore, like the Government of Nicaragua?

I believe we should isolate it, leave it to fester in its own juices. We should do more to help strengthen the democracies in Honduras and Costa Rica. We should make clear the concerted effort by the Sandinistas to export violent revolution will be met with a forceful response.

We should stop funding the futile Contra effort, which yields substantial nationalist support for the Sandinistas while providing Managua a ready excuse for importing Communist arms and curtailing freedom.

So this travesty continues as the administration seeks to reward failure with a 400 percent increase in taxpayer support. This effort remains futile, morally, practically, and strategically, and it is unworthy of our Nation.

As Walter Lippmann wrote 20 years ago in describing the perils of pursuing such self-defeating policies in Latin America: "A policy is bound to fail which deliberately violates our pledges and our principles, our treaties and our laws. In the great struggle with communism, we must find our strength by developing and applying our principles, not in abandoning them."

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Cranston.

Senator Pressler.

Senator PRESSLER. I would just welcome the Secretary here and join in congratulating him in his handling of the Philippines. I would add that I take a very favorable view of this request because the record shows that the administration has been right in many instances in Central America. Grenada is an example; El Salvador is another. The number of democracies there has increased over the last 4 or 5 years.

Privately, the leaders of those countries have told me that they are very much in favor of this type of activity.

We seem to be on a steady course there. Whether it is luck or whether it is policy one could perhaps debate. But it seems to be

working. So I welcome you here and look forward to what you have to say.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Pressler.

Senator Sarbanes, do you have an opening comment?

Senator SARBANES. Mr. Chairman, I join with my colleagues in welcoming the Secretary here this afternoon.

I want to commend the administration for its handling of the Philippines situation. I think it is an instance in which the executive and the legislative branches over a sustained period of time were able to work together in a positive and constructive way. Obviously, if we can extend that kind of cooperation elsewhere, it is to be welcomed.

I have difficulty on the issue on which the Secretary is appearing before us today in sharing his premises; and I am particularly concerned—and assume the Secretary will address it in his statement—about our apparent reluctance to lend support to the continuing efforts among the nations of Latin America to use negotiations as the basis for resolving the impasses with respect to Nicaragua.

Four nations where a commitment to democratic values and procedures has lately been restored or reaffirmed have now committed themselves to the concerted diplomatic initiative first undertaken by the Contadora group.

I know those foreign secretaries came and met with you here in Washington not long ago. It seems to me that this approach may offer the most effective means of using influence and pressure in support of our national interest and in seeing democratic principles and the principle of noninterference prevail in Central America.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Sarbanes.

Senator Evans.

Senator EVANS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

A little more than a year ago, I suggested with the presumption that only a newcomer can have that American foreign policy over the years has worked best when it has been a bipartisan policy joined in by both the congressional and executive branches. I join with my colleagues in suggesting that perhaps the finest example of that in recent years has been the experience of the last few weeks in the Philippines.

I would only hope that as we evolve an answer or a response to the administration's request here, that it ultimately become as bipartisan and as close to agreement between the administration and the Congress as is possible.

I have asked a number of questions about what happens if we are to approve this request and I have not yet received the kind of answers that comfort me. What happens if the response from the other side is a corresponding escalation? Do we then escalate further and does the administration then come back with an even larger request next year?

What happens if the result of this funding is sufficient to encourage a revolution, an uprising, in Nicaragua, and it appears, for the moment, that those who would rebel are going to succeed, but they don't quite do it, and it then appears that they are going to fail? What then do we do? What then is our response?

Although I have had several meetings with representatives of the administration, I have not yet received answers, at least none which is satisfactory to those questions.

I think inextricably associated with this aid are the freedoms and economic future of Central and South America and particularly Nicaragua's neighbors—El Salvador, Costa Rica, Honduras, and Guatemala.

The chairman has stated it well and eloquently when he said we have difficulty maintaining our commitment of $1.2 billion annually to Central America under the Jackson-Kissinger plan.

It seems to me that ample support of that commitment must be a prerequisite to any suggestion of aid to Nicaraguan rebels. If we cannot wholeheartedly and effectively support our friends, especially our friends who have moved toward democratic government and are strongly supporting the ideals we seek in Nicaragua, those who admire the United States increasingly with each passing month, then how can we substitute extra dollars for the Contras versus a short-changing of our friends?

Mr. Chairman, those are the kinds of questions that I would like to hear the answers to, and, frankly, so far have not.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Evans.

Senator Kerry, do you have an opening comment?

Senator KERRY. Just a very brief one. I gather opening comments have been taking a considerable amount of time. I do not have a formal statement.

I would like, first of all, to express my personal appreciation for the way in which you, Mr. Secretary, and your staff handled things in the last days of what has been one of the most exciting turn of events for all of us, as well as for the Filipino people.

In the number of trips that I made to the Philippines, I was struck by the competency by Ambassador Bosworth and by all of the people stationed there. They did a remarkable job of monitoring information that was changing rapidly and trying to make as dispassionate an assessment as possible about what was happening there. I think the chairman, I, and the others who were on that trip shared a great sense of confidence and good feeling about the professionalism in all that we observed.

Also, I think particularly Secretary Armacast, who is now directly under you, and Secretary Wolfowitz, with whom I spoke earlier today, have really been exceptional. In their testimony before this committee both of them were instrumental in aiding us our effort to try to frame an intelligent and sensitive response to the situation there and to try to help in whatever way we could to set up a structure of accountability for the election process. It was their candor that I think helped to build a bipartisan foreign policy and the success that we saw.

I certainly think in those last days that you, Mr. Secretary, and your people displayed great competency and professionalism. It was heartening.

I would like to say as a way of leading in, simply that as a Democrat, a new Senator, and somebody who has watched foreign policy, it was exciting and rewarding to be able to see this committee function and perform in a way that allowed the compromise to take

place and ultimately allowed us to serve the better interests of this country.

I wish it were as possible to do so in Central America. I really do.

I do not believe we differ in our goals in Central America. I do not think there is a Democrat here who wants a Soviet base in Central America, anywhere. I don't think there is one of us who would tolerate it. I don't think there is one of us who wants a country that is destabilizing the politics of Central America. I don't think there is one of us who wants a Nicaragua who is spreading revolution.

I certainly know there is not one of us who has any good feeling whatsoever for the increasing repression of the Sandinistas and who does not recognize that their ability to keep honor with their own word about pluralism has been less than what it ought to be.

There is not one of us who does not want to see change and does not want to protect the very real interests of the United States in this hemisphere.

But, listening to what my colleague, Mr. Evans, has said I share a reservation that somehow we are not pursuing all that is available to us with respect to the Contadora process. I look at a new president in Costa Rica, I look at a new president in Guatemala. I listen to their comments. I listen to the comments of new nations that have joined the Contadora process.

It seems to me there is a unanimity among those countries of criticism for our approach.

What I would like to see us do—and I hope your comments again will address this—is see if we can build a consensus that allows us to isolate a Sandinista regime for its lack of pluralism and its repression. We must put the pressure on them through all of our sources—the OAS, the world community, the United Nations, ourselves—in a way that will protect our larger interests. If those larger interests are subsequently threatened, we can then join together with a sense that we have exhausted the possibilities and that the community of American nations must jointly take the steps necessary to protect those interests.

So, I look forward to your testimony and I would certainly hope that we could build from in Central America, as we did in the Philippines, a unified approach to building what this country hopes to achieve in the world—democracy.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Kerry.

Senator Dodd, would you like to make an opening comment?

Senator DODD. I will have to swim over to the microphone first, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. I noticed there was some extra water down there.

Senator DODD. Mr. Secretary, welcome. We are delighted to have you before the committee.

I presume others have commended the administration on the handling of the Philippines situation, and I certainly want to join in those remarks. I think Steve Bosworth, and Secretaries Wolfowitz and Armitage did a magnificent job over the last 8 or 10 months in the Philippines.

With regard to this particular request, Mr. Secretary, I think you certainly can appreciate the fact that I have had concerns over the last few years about this particular program. My principal concerns are that we do not really seem to be achieving the goals that we have identified for ourselves by continuation of this program.

The concerns, of course, are continued repression in Nicaragua, a military buildup in Nicaragua, and it seems to me, despite the dollars that have been spent, those aspects of the situation not only have not improved, but they have even gotten worse, despite this particular effort. Add that to the fact that we are pretty much alone in this hemisphere, with the exception apparently of Chile and Paraguay, in believing that this kind of program is producing the kinds of results that its authors claim. That ought to cause us to reassess the situation and look for some alternatives to it.

There is a unique, historical occurrence ongoing in this hemisphere right now. Never before in the 500 years of history of this hemisphere have we had as many democracies functioning simultaneously. It is a historical precedent that is rare, indeed, and to have, as you did, the visit of eight foreign ministers come to talk about alternatives to this policy also, as far as I know, is unprecedented.

I know you took it seriously and what they had to say seriously.

My hope is that we would not find ourselves in a situation where we would be isolated on this issue in following a policy that just does not seem to be working very well, but rather that we would join with other nations of this hemisphere and do what we did in the Philippines.

I think it was such a wise move, an intelligent decision not to cling desperately to a policy in the Philippines that was only going to cause us additional difficulties.

I, for one, Mr. Secretary, would hope you would reexamine this issue and would come to the same conclusion that I have, and others, that we need to find an alternative policy. This policy just is not leading us in the direction that the administration I know would like it to end up in.

So, I would like to hear some alternative suggestions today and I welcome you to the committee.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Dodd.

[Whereupon, at 2:30 p.m., the committee proceeded with other business.]

[Whereupon, at 2:33 p.m., the committee resumed.]

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Secretary, let me just comment that I appreciate and want to publicly state the fact that Senator Kerry and Senator Murkowski of our committee went to the Philippines. I know that Senator Kerry, in Mindinao, with Admiral Long, was in some considerable physical danger, and that was true of many members of our delegation. They were there for 2 days observing in the field what occurred, under some stress, and they provided, as has been mentioned, I think an outstanding bipartisan foreign policy in this committee.

I think it was worthwhile, even though it has taken time for each one of us to have his say, because, as a committee, we are

going to have to meet together to see if it is possible for us to come much closer together.

The Chair will try to foster that spirit in the next few days that is allotted to this committee for its consideration.

At this point, we would very much like your testimony.

We appreciate your coming and are honored always by your presence.

We look forward to your presentation.

STATEMENT OF HON. GEORGE P. SHULTZ, SECRETARY OF STATE, ACCOMPANIED BY HON. ELLIOTT ABRAMS, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

Secretary SHULTZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

In the spirit of trying to have a discussion that can lead us toward a confluence of views, I would like to take the rather carefully prepared testimony that I have submitted to you and file it for the record. It has a lot of factual material in it that gives concrete support to points that I want to make, and then would make my comments to you less formally.

I would be glad to be interrupted as we go along.

It seems to me there is a certain logic chain that we need to go through, and I believe, as I have looked at this logic chain, that at least certain parts of it, judging from the comments that have already been made, would be accepted by everybody, and perhaps in other parts there would not. We would try to narrow down just what it is, exactly, we are arguing about.

Let me say, first, that I found much to agree with in comments about this subject in what has been said, and, of course, quite a bit to disagree with as well.

I appreciate the comments that have been made about the way the United States aspects of the Philippines situation were conducted. They were very generous comments.

I think it might be interesting to pause a little bit and to examine what we saw in the Philippines. Perhaps it is instructive for what we are considering now.

We saw a government at odds with its own people. We saw a fraudulent election, in which the opposition was hindered in its ability to campaign, although it was able to campaign.

We saw restrictions on media.

We saw a Catholic Church, a middle class, and other segments of society increasingly disaffected.

We saw the Communists boycott the election. And we all noticed that the only country that came in and congratulated the self-declared winner was the Soviet Union.

We see many of the same things in another country closer to home—Nicaragua—except that the situation is far, far worse.

We see that opposition parties are systematically stifled and not allowed any active role in political life. We see that the media are systematically censored. There is no freedom of the press at all.

We see that the Catholic Church is systematically stifled and abused.

Contrast that with the Philippines, and the role it played there.

We see a Communist secret police perfecting the instruments of oppression, and we see a massive military buildup from the Soviet Union and Cuba that threatens not only internal opponents but all neighboring countries.

I am just describing the situation. I doubt that anybody would describe it differently.

Now, in the Philippines, the forces of democracy were able to rally, to organize, and compete for power by peaceful means, in spite of the flawed election, because it was, at bottom, a pluralist society. In the end, President Marcos could not give the order to fire on people. He would not do it, although many urged him to.

Does anybody have any doubt what the order would be by the people running Nicaragua?

In Nicaragua, it is no wonder that the opponents have been driven to take up arms, that their numbers have increased, because the regime is relentlessly trying to impose a totalitarian system there. Once it gets imposed, it is very difficult to get it out.

This is part of the problem: The nature of the regime that is being constructed. It is no regime that anyone on this committee would say a good word for. I know that.

A second point I would like to make is that this regime, as the chairman brought out in his opening statement, has been getting rather massive Soviet support. So, it is a regime that clearly gets its support from the Soviet Union, and it is not a surprise that the day after the negative vote in the House last spring, Mr. Ortega took off for Moscow. That is where it is coming from.

I might say to those of you who have said our policy has failed in Nicaragua that I do not agree with that at all. I think our policy in Central America has been an outstanding success.

We have argued long and hard in this very committee about security assistance to El Salvador, and we finally got it. We got it in a form where they could feel it would keep coming, and the situation has improved, and the democracies in Central America are gradually taking root, fragile though they may be.

We have had an outlook in the administration about Nicaragua, but we have not been able to supply them with anything to fight with since the middle of 1984, getting close to 2 years ago. So, you have not been willing to give us the tools to make a policy work.

I might just take note that our aid was cut off in June 1984, and the first Soviet helicopter gunships were delivered by a Soviet ship in November 1984. What does that do to the argument that what we do affects what they do?

I think what we do does affect what they do. When we go to sleep, they are wide awake—a very interesting juxtaposition.

A third point that I would like to make is that there is unquestionably heavy Cuban involvement, right from the beginning. There is absolutely no doubt that the Cubans are taking part in the fighting.

There is no question about the fact that this country is trying to subvert its neighbors in various ways, by supporting from Managua the command and control of the guerrillas, the Communists in El Salvador as in Managua.

We see supplies going from one country to the other.

That is not the only way that these efforts are pursued. They are also pursued through terrorism, and Nicaragua is a country that supports terrorism. The M-19 was helped in its attack on the Palace of Justice in Bogota, Colombia, out of Nicaragua.

The Libyans are there, the PLO is there. It is a familiar scene.

At the back of my testimony—and I think you have copies—there is an interesting chart. You might get a hold of it. It is called Sandinista Intervention. I will hold it up for you [indicating].

On the chart you see the sort of dark red of Nicaragua—it's colored pink. They aren't all the way there yet. We still have a chance. [Laughter.]

Then you see the countries where arms originating in Nicaragua have been found. That is group A. You see Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica, and Colombia.

Then you skip down to the next group: Countries from which guerrillas have received military training in Nicaragua. There is quite a list there: Chile, Uruguay, Brazil, Venezuela, Ecuador. I might say, regarding Ecuador, that somebody once said that nobody in South America has anything but a difference of view with us about Nicaragua. Well, Ecuador has broken relations with Nicaragua.

Then you have group C countries in which radicals have received other support, such as safe haven. Safe haven is a wonderful thing for terrorists. They have to have it. We should have the saying "no place to hide." Nicaragua is a place to hide for terrorists.

The countries they have not touched are the blue ones, which I will let you speculate about for yourselves.

So, we have efforts to subvert neighbors and to terrorize. Beyond that, there is incontrovertible proof that the Nicaraguan Government has participated in drug trafficking, which we all know is all too closely allied with terrorism. We saw that in the Palace of Justice attack. That is what that was about.

The terrorists, on behalf of the drug traffickers, with which they have an unholy alliance, went there to kill the judges that were involved in the extradition of people who were held for drug trafficking. They got a lot of their armament from Nicaragua.

Well, I don't think I really need to belabor this point, but I think it is a very, very important point. I would imagine that everybody on the committee agrees that Nicaragua is bad news, no matter how you look at it. It is not a question of what they are like. It is a question of what should we do about it.

I have tried to describe this problem fully and carefully. I think every statement I have made can be backed up one way or another.

So, that is the problem. It is a cancer, right here, on our landmass, and it is trying to spread itself through various means.

I notice that there were phrases mentioned. Senator Cranston said ultimately that what is going on should be met "with a forceful response." You said that at some point. The question is, at what point.

I am trying to narrow in on where our differences are.

Our differences are not over the fact that there is a problem. Perhaps our differences are not that there should be a forceful response.

When should there be a forceful response?

I think Senator Kerry said at some point that we would not tolerate it. I don't know what "would not tolerate" means. That is pretty strong language.

So, that is the first point in the chain of logic here that I want to present to you; namely, that there is a problem. It is a big problem, it is an important problem. It is not just a little country that we do not have to worry about because it has all of these dimensions.

I want to go on now and say what the President thinks we should do about it. But I will just sort of pause and look around to see if anybody disagrees that this is a problem. I don't think anybody does. I think everybody agrees on that.

I am a big believer myself that you cannot get people interested in solutions until they agree there is a problem. Then we can have differences of opinion about it. But let's get it straight.

Senator PELL. Excuse me, Mr. Secretary. I think there is no question there is a problem. I think there is a difference in degree. Some of us see it as a big problem and some of us see it as less of a problem.

Secretary SHULTZ. Well, I am on the side of saying it is a big problem. By the time you have the nature of the regime, the heavy Soviet involvement, the Cuban troops, the subverting of neighbors, the use of terrorism, the involvement of drugs—that is a big problem when it is right here on our doorstep and involves countries that are very close to us. There is a problem.

Senator KERRY. Might I just ask one question?

Mr. Secretary, I really appreciate having this kind of dialog. I think it is terrific that we have this chance.

I have had some of the private briefings which were supposed to give us a better sense of these things, and, candidly, they have not done that. I am still asking questions of the CIA about the reality of evidence of arms shipments into El Salvador. The evidence has been almost nonexistent, if not of an absolutely negligible nature.

Secretary SHULTZ. Well, there was a car last December, for example, that had an accident. There it was and you could see what was in it.

Senator KERRY. But the point I am making is that this is the first time I have seen this map with all of the different colors showing the various degrees of either military training, other support, et cetera, in South America.

Now almost every country, except I guess for four, have been infiltrated with significant military training and other support. Yet, I look on the back chart, comparing 1976 and 1986, and almost every single one of those countries are proudly in the green, being largely or entirely democratic or open societies in transition the other way.

So, while the Nicaraguans have supposedly been infiltrating all these nations, they have successfully become more democratic anyway, free and open societies, despite the Sandinistas increasing involvement. They are getting better while the Sandinistas are getting involved.

Secretary SHULTZ. I do not think there is any inconsistency because the Nicaraguan Communists are not happy about this trend toward democracy. This is an outstanding movement in the 1976 to 1986 period. That is a chart I did not refer to, but it is a terrific chart, showing what has happened.

I know we all participated in helping to bring this about, and everybody on the committee is delighted with these trends. It is quite dramatic.

I think you can see at least some—it's not perfect by any means; I don't want to infer that—some relationship between the very few countries that are still colored brown and the countries that are involved, in one form or another, in efforts by Nicaraguan terrorism or destabilization, in one form or another.

Senator PRESSLER. I note that Mexico is blue in the first chart. It would not fall into that category of a country where arms originating in Nicaragua have been found, then?

Secretary SHULTZ. No; Mexico has not been hit by Nicaragua. Mexico has maintained quite a good relationship with Nicaragua.

Senator BIDEN. That's why.

Secretary SHULTZ. Although I think some are at least increasingly uneasy about that.

Senator EVANS. Mr. Secretary, just to follow through on that same chart—and I expect that the results can be given to me a little bit later—I am always a little suspicious of charts that are colored. Maybe it is my engineering training. [Laughter.]

I would like to know how many incidents have occurred in each country. The way that chart is colored, one safe haven in Brazil colors a whole lot of South America. I would like to know just how significant those incidents are in each of those nations.

Secretary SHULTZ. Obviously, the colors vary to show that they differ in significance.

Senator, the safe haven is not in Brazil. The safe haven is in Nicaragua. The problem is that when you have terrorists and drug traffickers that move around—and we all know it is an international problem—one safe haven is a big problem for everybody. That is one of the problems with Libya.

Senator EVANS. That's right.

All I want to know is is it 1, 10, 100, or 1,000 in each of these cases?

Secretary SHULTZ. It varies in its significance. I do not try to say that Brazil is a hotbed of Nicaraguan-inspired terrorism. But it has felt some penalty from it.

The point of the chart is to say to you that this country, with its sponsorship, is trying to spread itself around in a fundamentally evil way. And I think it is a pretty good demonstration of that.

Senator BIDEN. Mr. Secretary, I want to agree with your statement—I think all of us do—that Nicaragua is not the good guy on the block. That's No. 1.

No. 2, I'd like to state that I believe we clearly have the right to intervene; that, in fact, the notion of Nicaragua's self-determination in light of Sandinista activity cannot preclude our right to intervene if it is called for. And, also, the responsibility that we have to protect our own interest in the hemisphere—or anywhere, for that matter, but in this case in the hemisphere—is not to be questioned.

What I would like to ask you, and I think it is appropriate at this point, is this. You set out four specific objectives. We have agreed here on what the nature of the problem is. But you have set out four specific objectives.

One is that the objection to the Sandinista regime is based on the Cuban/Soviet/East European/Soviet bloc presence; two, the military buildup, which threatens its neighbors; three, the subversion by Nicaragua of its neighbors as seen on the chart; and, four, the internal repression within Nicaragua.

My question, as it relates to us now, is zeroing in on an objective and the opportunity to achieve objectives. Do you, does the administration believe it is possible, through negotiations, to satisfactorily solve the first three of those objectives, that is, Cuban-Soviet military buildup, interference with neighbors' activities.

Is that possible to achieve through negotiations if you abandon the fourth objective, which was internal repression?

Secretary SHULTZ. I don't know. I think we should negotiate, and we have been trying to negotiate.

One of the things I believe we should do, which I want to present to you, is a negotiating plan, how we would go about it.

But, I fear neglecting the fourth objective, because it is the internal construction of the way a government works that affects the outlook eventually of the country.

So, it is important to us, whether or not the countries in our neighborhood, or for that matter the world, which is getting smaller and smaller everywhere, has an outlook and a system that is not necessarily exactly like ours—everybody has to design his own system—but one that addresses its own internal problems and is not constantly trying to subvert everybody.

Senator BIDEN. I am not suggesting it should or should not. Let me make sure I understand your answer.

Let me put it in a slightly different way, and then I will cease on this point, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary SHULTZ. Well, I am going to come to the negotiating plan. Let's discuss, when we get to it, what the negotiating plan is.

Senator BIDEN. Well, even before we get to that, I want to know what your objective is. I want to make sure I understand it clearly. And this is the last question I will ask at this point.

Even if we could independently verify that the Cubans and Soviets were gone, that the military buildup was turned around, and that the Nicaraguans were not engaging in activities outside of their borders, even if that were the case, the administration would not be satisfied, even if they could independently verify that? That would not make you sit before us and say there is no need to support the Contras any longer, would it?

Secretary SHULTZ. I think it is a question of how you verify things.

Senator BIDEN. But if it could be verified?

Secretary SHULTZ. And the best way of verifying things is to construct a situation where the people involved in doing things want to do other things. Then you can have a result you can have some confidence in.

The best verification is an agreement that enforces itself because both parties want to see it work.

Senator BIDEN. There is no doubt about that. The best verification for arms control with the Soviet Union would be for them to be a capitalist, democratic country. That is the best verification.

Secretary SHULTZ. No, that is a different situation.

Senator BIDEN. OK. I will not pursue it now. I will get back to it.

Secretary SHULTZ. Perhaps, Mr. Chairman, we could say that in varying degrees, at least, everybody agrees there is a big problem here. We are not arguing about that.

Our question is what should we do about it. But the problem is there, and in one way or another, whatever you think, it compels you to have an answer of some kind.

So, here is the administration's answer. It is basically in three parts.

One part is support for those in Nicaragua who want to fight for the freedom and independence of their country.

A second part is to look to them and work with them not only in connection with what they are against, but what they are for. What are they fighting for, as well as what are they fighting against?

The third part is a negotiating strategy and set of tactics: what does it mean to say we should be interested in negotiation?

Those are the three parts of the President's approach here.

The first part you know because you have received his letter. He calls for support for the balance of this fiscal year and through the next fiscal year of $100 million, divided: $30 million into assistance of the kind that is now flowing, that is, food, medical supplies, clothing, things of that kind, some communications equipment. We think that of that, $3 million ought to be kind of carved out, and to the extent that problems that we think of as human rights type problems need to be addressed, this would be funding to address those problems and try to be able to take the care in often conflict-torn situations to handle things in a proper way.

Senator BIDEN. Should we ask you questions now about the specifics of those things, or wait?

Secretary SHULTZ. Well, if I could describe the problem, then we can come back to it.

Senator BIDEN. OK. Fine.

Secretary SHULTZ. The second part, $70 million, would be used at the President's discretion, and administered as he thinks will be most effective. We would consider that a vote in favor of this proposition—and I understand that it gets voted up or down in the end—would basically free us to provide intelligence to people and help them gain support and so on, so that we would not have our hands tied behind our backs in trying to help those who are fighting against this regime that we have all agreed is a major problem.

There is a schedule for how the money would be paid out over time. Of course, we would report to you periodically, and so on.

So, one part is a program to help the people in the country who are fighting for the freedom and independence of their country.

A second part is to say to those people, both in the country and outside, well, we know what you are against and we are against it, too; but we would like to know what you are for. What would you like to achieve?

They have met together and in Caracas, Venezuela, they announced a program of positive principles and objectives, on the nature of the kind of government, economic policy, and so forth, that they would like to see followed in their country. So they have

positive objectives. The document that describes them is available to you and no doubt you have it.

The point I want to make is that they are for things and the things they are for are the things you are for.

So, we are for the good guys in this situation. Clearly, we are on the right side of this issue. We are on the side of democracy. We are on the side of the rule of law. We are on the side of economic development.

We are on the right side.

The third thing that we need to have is a negotiating plan, because, if we can, we certainly want to see issues like these settled through a negotiated outcome.

So, what is our negotiating plan?

The President has a clear-cut, definite plan.

In the first place, we support and try to be helpful as we can to the Contadora group. I might say that the Nicaraguan Communists can, in various ways, as this group has gone along, hardly be said to have supported them.

Second, the President has called for and supported the United Nicaraguan Opposition in calling for a cease-fire and an internal dialog of reconciliation, designed to find a structure of government and a way in which the various contending parties can compose themselves and come to agreement about how Nicaragua ought to be governed. We have said since the Nicaraguan Communists have said they want to talk to us directly that if they are ready to do that, perhaps under church-sponsored mediation, that we would be willing to sit down simultaneously and have that direct negotiation.

It would not, as you know, be the first time we have sat down. We have maintained our diplomatic relations with Nicaragua. There is plenty of opportunity to talk. We have an outstanding ambassador there.

I was persuaded, the President was persuaded and sent me, persuaded by President de la Madrid of Mexico that it would be a good idea to try to develop a dialog with Nicaragua. I am the guy who went to Managua to get that started.

We had some nine sessions following that which Ambassador Harry Shlaudeman conducted, our outstanding Latin American diplomat. In the end, we had to break that off because the Nicaraguans were using it to undermine the Contadora process, and they were starting to go around and say to the other countries involved why should we deal with you, we are dealing with the United States.

So we had to stop.

It was not, in other words, serving its intention of supporting the Contadora process, which we support and they do not.

We have a special Presidential negotiator, and he stood before you and you confirmed him as Ambassador-at-Large, Harry Shlaudeman. Before him, we had Senator Stone.

So we have tried to put an outstanding person in, to devote his time to seeing in every way we can how we can move this process along.

He just came back from a trip around to all the different countries in the region. In his way, he tries to help them work things out.

As some of you noted, I had a meeting on February 10 with eight foreign ministers, from the Contadora four and then four others which have become associated with them. We had an extensive and, on the whole, a constructive discussion of this whole area.

I think it is fair enough to say that they asked that we hold off on aid to the Contras.

I cannot help but say—and I am quite ready to say it here in the public session—that we have obtained documents from Nicaragua that describe their game plan, and their game plan, among other things, is to somehow or other persuade people not to help the Contras for long enough so that, with this big Soviet buildup of advanced weapons, they will wipe them out before we wake up.

So I am a little dubious about proposals to hold off while negotiations take place. We have held off, ever since June 1984, and the result has been not positive for negotiations, it has been negative.

But, at any rate, I meet with these foreign ministers. We met on that occasion. It was a very interesting and special meeting. I have met with other foreign ministers many times and worked at this myself.

Beyond that, we need to have in our minds a notion of what might happen in a negotiation.

Suppose that the Nicaraguan Communists agree to sit down with their opposition and talk about internal reconciliation and we have a simultaneous discussion going on with them. How would we go about it?

Well, the way we would go about it is the way you were suggesting, Senator, as I see it anyway. We'd say here are the things that are a problem as we see it, one, two, three, four, with some detail. We are quite prepared to sit down and say if you'll do this, we'll do that. A real negotiation, give and take.

We'll have to come and consult with the Congress all the time as we do it, but we are prepared to undertake that kind of negotiation.

For example, under the right circumstances, in terms of behavior—not what somebody says, but what they do—we might be willing to say all right, we will cancel our embargo or cancel some part of our embargo, and so on.

So, what I am trying to describe to you is an attitude toward negotiation. Now, this is not an attitude that says negotiation means that we will agree to whatever it takes to get an agreement. I know you would not want us to do that, any more than you would want us to do that in Geneva. But it is an approach that says what we would like to see is an outcome that is based on a negotiation if a reasonable outcome can be found. We are willing to try to find it.

In fact, we are doing that and have been doing that.

Our observation is that, as in so many other areas, if you do not have any cards to play, you cannot get into the card game. Power and diplomacy go together. They are not alternatives.

If you have some cards, you are welcome at the game. If you don't have any, or if they perceive that you cannot get any, then you are not welcome at the game. You are irrelevant.

So, the support for the opposition is designed to help them assert their cause, at a minimum make it plain to the Nicaraguan Communists that they cannot get their way by military force, which is what they want to do. And if you cannot get your way by military force, then maybe you will think that you should negotiate—which they are not willing to do at this point.

So, that is our program.

I might say that it is a four point program.

No. 1, there is a real and genuine problem and no doubt about it, and it affects us. It affects that neighborhood.

No. 2, we have to help the people who are willing to stand up and fight for the freedom and independence of their country. We have to help them in ways that can work, including military equipment.

No. 3, we want to know what they are for. We have seen what they are for and we agree with it. We think it is a good program.

No. 4, to go along with this, we have to be ready to try to find a negotiated solution if there is a reasonable one to be found. But we will never find it if we just walk off in a corner and do not do anything.

So that, Mr. Chairman, is our program, and I probably should have read my testimony because it is much better. It was worked on very hard. It is crisp and has a lot of information in it. Elliott and everybody worked hard on it. I will get hell when I get back to the department for not reading it. But it is on the record and I hope that it will be read because it is a much better and more careful effort to say what I have said.

But I wanted to say it this way to try to give some flavor of our thinking, how we are going about this, how does the President think about it.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary. Your testimony will be made a part of the record and we appreciate your willingness to explain the processes of reasoning that have led you to this formulation.

At this point, in order to structure our hearing, I think we will proceed, by unanimous consent, to 10 minute periods of questioning by Members.

I will pass on this round and will ask Senator Kassebaum to initiate the questioning, if she would like to do so.

Senator KASSEBAUM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, I would guess, as you have, that all of us certainly would agree with you that the Sandinista Government is bad news. I would agree with you that it is a big problem that does matter to us.

There are many things that we do agree on.

Saying all that, I think it is also very important for us to assess in a thoughtful way what we can do to be of assistance to the efforts of the opposition, trying to achieve freedom and democracy in Nicaragua.

It is not always just the amount of money that we give. It seems to me that it is how that money is going to be used.

As we assess what we think this $100 million can do, it seems to me that it is very important to look at the Contras themselves and what kind of agenda they are developing.

I myself have concerns as far as their representation in Nicaragua of the political agenda that they hope to achieve for freedom and democracy.

There have been reports that the Contras do not work well with the inside so-called opposition in Nicaragua and that the North and South opposition are split.

I have reservations and I would like to hear your answer to what kind of military strategy the Contras intend to use—not in specifics, but there have been many questions raised about how well-trained even the leadership is in the field in military strategy.

These, it seems to me, are very important questions if we want to assess the value of the $100 million that we give.

It is frustrating to look over the past year and see the Contadora effort stalled. The Sandinista Government has become even more repressive, has cracked down on civil and human liberties. But also the Contras have been weakened.

Now, perhaps the case can be made that it is because we have not given all the aid that we should. But the humanitarian aid that we did give last fall has not been used either to its fullest extent.

These are questions that, to me, Mr. Secretary, have to be answered as we are given a chance to either vote up or down on $100 million, because raising this point and these questions does not mean that one does not support the efforts of the opposition. But I think, in many ways, to even help the opposition to be successful, we have to also be responsible in making sure that our assistance is useful.

My question to you, first and foremost, is how do you believe this $100 million will assist the Contras in developing strategy, both political and military, and a regional strategy that the Contras I think have to be a participant in? It is not us that evolves it for them. It seems to me they have to be the opposition that speaks out to reach the people within Nicaragua and the region.

I would like your interpretation of how the $100 million will help them do that.

Secretary SHULTZ. First of all, it will be a message, depending upon particularly how broad the support is, of U.S. support, and support that extends over a period of time, that suggests staying power.

We really have had very little support since the middle of 1984. So this would be a statement of considerable support that extends over a period of time, and I think that would send a powerful message, just as in El Salvador the final emergence of security and economic assistance that had a time horizon to it made a big difference.

I think that is extremely important.

Second, you raised the question of the cohesion of the opposition. Obviously, there are people in different parts of the country with different backgrounds and different things they are interested in. There can be differences of view. And there are.

But I think, increasingly, there has been a sense that there is a need to have a positive program. There has been discussion of it and one has been set out.

Now, I think if they see that there is some real support from the United States, it will encourage them to regard their program as more and more of a potential reality, and it will help in this regard.

It will never be perfect, any more than it is in other cases where we see groups who have come together and who have a very difficult row to hoe. Their communications are not as good as they ought to be or as we would like them to be, and so on.

So, there is cohesion. It is not perfect. I think it will be better as they see there is genuine support.

Third, you asked me about military strategy. I last thought about that when I was in the Marine Corps in World War II.

Senator KASSEBAUM. Well, maybe I should say training, then.

Secretary SHULTZ. I don't know about military strategy, but I assume some combination of small unit things. I'm not going to comment on that. I am the wrong person.

Senator KASSEBAUM. Perhaps I should have said training and the use of the equipment.

Secretary SHULTZ. Yes, there will be obviously a need to train people in the use of equipment and provision is made for that.

You also made a reference to use of the present so-called humantarian aid that has been provided for. I think the total provided for was $27 million.

As of now, we have been authorized to spend $18 million. That has just about all been obligated. With our most recent report to the Congress, the balance will be triggered in and we can then start obligating that.

We have had difficulty delivering that aid. It is not easy to deliver aid where you have, in a sense, an overt program that has to have, at least at one end of itself, covert administration. It is a very peculiar animal, and it is hard to handle. But deliveries have been made and I think the system is much better now. We have struggled through that problem.

So the point is certainly we have had difficulties in that delivery, which only points up the fact that they really have had practically no support from the United States for 2 years. And yet they are still there and still sizable.

In fact, one of the other charts showed the representation and shows you the number of people who are involved. As I understand it from those who are working more directly with them, there would be at least another 10,000 people if they had an ability to get simple clothing and supplies. What can people do if they don't have any help? They cannot sort of manufacture it out of thin air.

Senator KASSEBAUM. Mr. Secretary, have we thought ahead as far as the strengthening of this opposition and as it grows, as it becomes, I would guess, a major civil war? What will our role be then?

We are hoping for negotiation, but have we thought about how we are going to continue to be supportive in this process, as I would assume as it expands it becomes a major civil conflict?

Secretary SHULTZ. We want to support them in a way that can be effective for them. "Effectiveness" means, on the one hand, that they are able to contend successfully with a Nicaraguan Communist army, and on the other hand, that they continue to have the favor of the population where they are.

Now, I said earlier that, as I see it, we are on the side of the good guys. The fact of the matter is that the people we are supporting generate their forces by volunteers. They have more people who want to volunteer than they have money to equip them with.

The Nicaraguan Communists, by contrast, have to rely on an increasingly difficult and brutal conscription, with desertions and so forth. So there is a message there, just in that.

Senator KASSEBAUM. If I may just follow through briefly, you mentioned training.

Are we going to be training in Honduras some of the military commanders?

Secretary SHULTZ. I think that is precisely how military things will be conducted, and where, and things of that kind—I think it is just not a good idea for us to be broadcasting to the opposition, namely the Nicaraguan Communists.

Senator KASSEBAUM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Kassebaum.

Senator Pell.

Senator PELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I believe we could question your views that Nicaragua is a threat to its neighbors. My recollection is that the President-elect of Costa Rica has specifically asked us not to send arms there, and I don't recall the President of Guatemala, Mr. Cerezo, or of Honduras, Mr. Azcona, asking that we send arms or supporting the sending of arms.

How do you reconcile that with your view that she is a threat to her neighbors?

Secretary SHULTZ. The problem in the surrounding countries is that they see next to them a major Soviet base being created, with modern equipment that they don't have any access to—in the case of Costa Rica they do not want it—and a big army in the hands of people who are quite prepared to use it. So it is very intimidating, and that is bad. We want to stop that.

Senator PELL. Well, then, wouldn't they wish us to send arms to the opponents of this potential Russian base?

Secretary SHULTZ. Of course.

Senator PELL. By the same token, as I just said, the President-elect of Costa Rica asked us not to.

Secretary SHULTZ. Well, you will have to go and talk to him carefully, personally.

Senator PELL. Well, in the press there is a quotation to that affect. Also I do not recall, when I was talking with President Cerezo, that he asked us to do this, nor do I recall a request from the Hondurans. I was surprised that the Hondurans have not, because they have a big American military base there now and a good deal of their economy is dependent on the U.S. military presence.

Secretary SHULTZ. I have not seen the interview that you are referring to, but Elliott Abrams tells me that if you continue reading in it, he refers to Nicaragua as "a second Cuba."

I wonder if that is really what we want.

I'd almost like to reverse the roles here.

Senator PELL. I am looking for the detail and have asked somebody with better eyesight than mine to try to pick that phrase out. So far we have not found it.

It is not in this particular article.

Mr. ABRAMS. It was in the John MacLaughlin broadcast last week.

Senator PELL. I see. But I am reading from a press article now, as I mentioned.

Is it true that 9 out of the top 10 general staff officers of the FDN are former Guardsmen? I believe Congressman McHugh received a letter from Assistant Secretary Motley to that effect.

Secretary SHULTZ. I am going to ask Assistant Secretary Abrams to go through the complete roster and tell you about the people who are involved and what their credentials are, because it is rather impressive.

Senator PELL. Excuse me, but what I am interested in is the field commanders, not the civilian leaders.

Mr. ABRAMS. Yes.

Senator, we have one chart to which I would draw your attention, which shows overall the FDN military commanders. It is really quite striking.

If you look at the numbers on the bottom, there are slightly more people who used to be in the National Guard than there are people who used to be Sandinistas.

Twenty percent of the FDN military leaders—and this is only talking about the FDN and not the other anti-Sandinista military forces—20 percent are former Sandinistas, and you see the other mix—professionals, farmers, students, with that very large proportion of former Sandinistas.

Recently, I think it was yesterday, in fact, I sent Senator Lugar a letter which breaks this down into a little bit more detail. If you look at the senior FDN leaders, once again, you find a very slight excess of former National Guard members over former Sandinista officials.

If you look at the regional commanders, you find three former National Guard members and six former Sandinista soldiers.

If you look at the task force commanders, once again, you find 14 formerly associated in some way with the National Guard and 13 formerly associated with the Sandinistas. And then there are a variety of others—former peasants, former medical students.

Of course, when we say "formerly associated with the National Guard," that includes someone who may have been a private and who had no connection with the Somoza dynasty.

So I think it is true that when the FDN began some years ago, there was a heavy influence of people who had been associated with the National Guard. But that force has evolved today into a very broad and representative military force with people from all walks of life in Nicaragua.

Senator PELL. But in response to my specific question, is it correct to say that 9 of the 10 FDN general staff are former Guardsmen? Nine out of ten.

Mr. ABRAMS. I do not believe that is correct.

Senator PELL. This is, Mr. Secretary, what your predecessor wrote in a letter.

Mr. ABRAMS. That is not correct according to our information.

The information, of course, keeps changing. But it is not true that 9 out of 10—was that the number, 9 out of 10——

Senator PELL. Yes.

Mr. ABRAMS [continuing]. Were formerly officials of the National Guard.

Senator PELL. As of now. But it was true, apparently, last spring.

Mr. ABRAMS. There has been another year of change and expansion for the opposition forces.

Senator PELL. Is the administration making any efforts to diminish the Somocista influence?

Mr. ABRAMS. Well, we are not making the effort. They are making the effort, and it has been happening over a 5-year period.

What has happened is that at the break, that is, at the moment that the Sandinistas took over, July 15, 1979, some people in the National Guard went out of the country and started to fight the Sandinistas. Most Nicaraguans were content with the victory which had then taken place.

In the following 6 years, what has happened is that the whole population has turned against the Sandinistas and all elements of it are now beginning to leave the country and support the Nicaraguan opposition. As they infuse the opposition, the opposition and the FDN in particular become more and more representative of the country as a whole.

It has been a marvelous thing to watch.

Senator PELL. Of course, these statements I am sure are based on what you believe to be the facts. Others who have been down there come back with different stories, however.

I, myself, was there some time ago and had a different reaction.

Sometimes I think it might be a good idea if we asked the chairman to take the committee on a trip, like Senator Sparkman took us once to Panama to see the Panama Canal. Perhaps we should go on a trip down there, because people of good faith, of honesty, are coming back with very different reports. This concerns me.

I would like to turn for a moment to the question of human rights.

You have made some references to the Sandinistas' abuses of human rights. In this regard, Amnesty International has put out a report that is quite interesting, and the Lawyers committee has, too.

Would you not concur with me that the abuses have been very heavy on the part of the guerrillas?

Mr. ABRAMS. I would not agree, Senator.

I would note, first, that that report is a 36 page report, of which 32 pages are dedicated to the growing human rights abuses by the Sandinistas. Four pages mention allegation of human rights abuses by the opposition.

Our own investigations into that have indicated that there tends to be a great deal of unreliable information here.

What I think is really important is that the people of Nicaragua are supporting the opposition now. It does not make sense for the opposition to abuse its own base of support. In fact, they have set up, partly with the humanitarian funds that you have provided, a human rights operation at the overall UNO level and another one especially at the FDN level, which do educational campaigns, that is, making sure that the combatants know what their responsibilities are under the laws of war, and also do investigations to make sure that individual combatants who violate the laws of war are punished.

Last summer, for example, they conducted 21 courts martial, in which 19 individuals were found guilty and 2 were found innocent. So they are investigating and prosecuting these abuses when they occur.

Senator PELL. What would be the difference between the situation here and the situation in Guatemala 30 years ago, when we supported the overthrow of the Arbenz government and opened up the door to a long regime of misery for the Guatemalans?

Secretary SHULTZ. I am not familiar with that piece of history, Senator, so I cannot really make a comparison.

What I can do is reflect on the situation in Central America today, the transitions that we have seen, the success of our policy, the fact that what was thought to be inevitable 5 years ago has turned out not to be inevitable at all, but on the contrary has turned around, and the objectives of the people in opposition, which I think basically are the right objectives.

In the spirit of this, we started out with an idea of a kind of back and forth here, and I wonder if in that spirit I could ask a question.

Senator PELL. Certainly—but on your own time.

Secretary SHULTZ. Well, I see the yellow light is on and I don't know what that means. That is Cory Aquino's light.

The CHAIRMAN. It is now your time.

Secretary SHULTZ. It is now my time.

Well, I did not write down precisely what you said in your opening statement, Senator, but as I noted it, you said something along the lines of at a certain point or under certain circumstances the situation would have to be, and what I wrote down was, "met with a forceful response."

I agree with you. I think these are the circumstances, this is the time.

We have had almost 2 years of no support for them. That certainly has not worked, as has been pointed out, and the situation is terrible.

So, it seems to me this is the time.

When you say a "forceful response," I don't know what "forceful" means, or what Senator Kerry means in saying that there is a situation that we will "not tolerate."

But it seems to me here we are, and we have people who want to fight for freedom and independence in their country, and they are asking, they are begging for help.

It is almost a Churchillian type situation: give us the tools. Then I think we should give forceful tools.

But I do not know how you would define the circumstances in a more compelling way than they are defined right now, and this is a time when there are people who are still there, who have these desires. If the Nicaraguan Communists get their way, they are going to create a totalitarian society. That is going to be very difficult to contend with.

This is what is bothering me here.

Senator PELL. I think you must have confused my remarks with those of somebody else, because in my opening statement I did not talk about a forceful response.

Secretary SHULTZ. Well, I got it wrong, then.

Senator KERRY. May I make a comment to that?

Senator PELL. Well, let me finish first, please.

To carry that thought through, the kind of response I would like to see would be where we let the Contadora countries and the support group take the lead, because they are the immediate neighbors, and we stay more in the background. We handled the Philippines situation beautifully by leaving it up to the Filipinos. I wish we could apply the same techniques here, by letting others who are more under the gun, more threatened, more close to the so-called threat than we are, try to fill the breach.

Secretary SHULTZ. But the problem, Senator, is what that amounts to is we will leave it up to the Soviets, the Cubans, and the Nicaraguan Communists. That is who we are leaving it up to, and we know what they want to produce. They want to produce a totalitarian style of country. And you can just see it. If you take a moving picture of it, you will see exactly what they are trying to do.

Senator PELL. Where we differ is who came in first, which chicken and which egg came in first. Did we do it first and they responded, or did the Communists do it first and we responded? This is my problem.

Secretary SHULTZ. Let me call your attention once again to the fact that our assistance was cut off in June, 1984, and the first Soviet helicopter gunships were delivered by a Soviet ship in November 1984.

I think the pattern is that when we create a vacuum, the Soviet Union moves into it. We have seen that. We know that.

When we show that we have a different view of matters, then they will pay a little attention.

That is a graphic example.

The CHAIRMAN. Let me intervene for just a moment because I know that Senator Kerry would like to respond and I am indebted to Senator Dodd and Senator Kerry for their willingness to allow Senator Pressler and then Senator Evans to ask their questions so that Senator Evans can finish by 1 minute to 4 p.m. and thus preside at 4 p.m.

Senator EVANS. Two minutes.

The CHAIRMAN. So it is that kind of situation.

If we can hold off temporarily and let Senator Pressler have his time.

Senator KERRY. Mr. Chairman, I hate to interrupt, but the problem is I also have to leave and won't even be able to question because of that double thing.

Senator PRESSLER. I also have to leave. I have to chair at 4 p.m.

Senator DODD. I'll be here, Mr. Secretary. We'll get together. [Laughter.]

Secretary SHULTZ. We'll just settle the whole thing when everyone else is out of the room. [Laughter.]

Senator KERRY. If I could only respond to that question, that is all I would like to ask.

The CHAIRMAN. All right. Take 2 minutes to respond, and then Senator Pressler.

Senator KERRY. Could I also ask, Mr. Chairman, that the record remain open so that I could submit written questions?

The CHAIRMAN. By unanimous consent, it is so ordered.

Senator KERRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I very much appreciate that.

Mr. Secretary, in answer to your question, it has always been my impression that what we have tried to do as a country is establish a framework within which our actions are legitimized, and always that has been under rule of law, or at least we have tried to make it under an existing rule of law.

It seems to me that this administration has championed a theory known as the doctrine of proportional response by which, when somebody does something, our government would respond accordingly.

It appears to me that we violate both of those doctrines in our current approach, because of the way in which the Contras came into being, because of their current operation, and because of their tactics.

I look at the Contadora agreement which the Sandinistas had said they would sign, the 1984 September document.

Now, I read that document and chapter 3 of it, concerning commitments with regard to security matters, is awfully clear. There is room for some further definition in it and we ought to press for some clearer verification and other things.

But that document says that in the first stage, the Sandinistas are currently willing—right now, at this moment in time—to restrict their military forces to current levels; they say they will adhere to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which restricts any kind of offensive lethal nuclear weapon in the vicinity; they are willing to restrict their level of maneuvers; they are willing to set up a verification process for the flow of arms. There are a host of protocols to which they say they are willing to adhere.

They are also willing, they say, to move to adopt the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and a host of about 15 other covenants.

My question is why can't we move as I think this administration could? We have not been pushing in the same kind of way that we have a Geneva Conference or that we have had other kinds of efforts highlight the Contadora process.

There are new nations that are now part of it, new presidents who want us to pursue that policy.

Would it not be better for us to establish that kind of protocol? Then, Mr. Secretary, when you come to us and say that it has been violated, we can look at the evidence mutually, and see that there

is a process in there, there is a process in the Treaty of Rio, for our ability to come to the defense of a Costa Rica if it were in trouble?

In today's "New York Times" there is an article about Nicaragua and Costa Rica putting together a pact and defending mutually their border lines.

So why is it, in the face of all of that, that we cannot take an alternative route which establishes a legitimacy which permits us to then respond? That is the forcefulness I am talking about. When you have a clear violation of the rule of law, you have a clear foundation on which to act. And I do not believe we have that foundation today.

Secretary SHULTZ. The rule of law you are referring to certainly permits self-defense, and the statement of the problem that I laid out here and with which all the members of the committee broadly agreed, certainly suggests that somebody needs to defend themselves, because you have a strong, increasingly strong and aggressive country.

So the rule of law, meaning the right to self-defense, is met.

Proportionality? My gosh, we are helping people who want to fight for the freedom and independence of their country. The question I expected you to ask me was of course we agree with you, but you are not asking for nearly enough money compared with the huge sums of money the Soviet Union is pouring into there.

Senator KERRY. I know you didn't expect that question from me. [Laughter.]

Secretary SHULTZ. That is the proportionality question that I thought you might be referring to when you talked about proportionality.

Now, as far as the Contadora is concerned, the 1984 draft that you referred to had no operational verification in it. It said that verification was a good idea, but it did not have operationally in mind how that would be done.

If we came to you with a proposed agreement of some kind on any kind of arms control, which this is, and we said well, as far as verification is concerned, we are going to get around to that after a while, you'd throw us out of here and justifiably so.

The reaction of the other Central American countries was that they opposed it for that reason, they opposed it because of the lack of simultaneity, they opposed it because on the record the Nicaraguan Communist government cannot be trusted. They have made all kinds of statements and they have not kept them.

So there has to be good verification.

Those are the responses that I have.

Senator KERRY. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. I will follow up.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Pressler.

Senator PRESSLER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, I am in agreement with much of what you say here today, and I brought this point up over in the meeting with the President. I don't know if he heard it or not. It might have been his bad ear. But then, most of his ears are pretty good.

But there is a problem with Catholic and Protestant ministers, priests, and bishops in the Midwest. Somehow, they are convinced of a different set of facts.

I don't know if they get their information from briefings. Some have gone on trips. Perhaps they have literature. I don't know how their information can be so much the opposite.

In the upper Midwest, at least, there is a tradition, the Norwegian-Scandinavian-Germanic tradition of being very interested in world affairs. There are a lot of sanctuaries that have been set up in churches, letters to the editors from ministers, priests, and people associated closely with the clergy.

I wonder if it would be useful for the President to have a meeting at the White House with the bishops, Protestant and Catholic and others, especially in my part of the country, because the information, the same information that we have, just does not seem to be coming through for some reason to this group.

Would you support such a meeting? I am sure that the President, if you got him in a room with them, would be very persuasive. Has that been done? Has there been an effort with this group, the bishops, let's say? There are a lot of people we are talking about.

Secretary SHULTZ. I don't know about that.

I would not want to make a commitment on the part of the President to meet with any particular group. I would think these churchmen and women ought to meet with the cardinal in Nicaragua or perhaps get a chance to meet with him when he is not in Nicaragua. Probably some of you have met with him. His views are very clear about what is happening to the church. The Nicaraguan Communists made it very clear the way they greeted the Pope what they think of religion.

Senator PRESSLER. That's right. But somehow that has not gotten down to the ranks.

Secretary SHULTZ. I agree with that. But we still have to focus on what the facts really are.

Senator PRESSLER. Do you think that a meeting in the State Department, where you could invite in some of the bishops, especially from the Midwest, the upper Midwest, because that is where I am aware of the problem—that is where I am from and I cannot speak for the rest of the country. They seem to have exactly the opposite approach from the one that I am developing on it and that you have.

Has the State Department done some work with this group is what I am asking?

Secretary SHULTZ. We have had a big effort to get information out. We have issued quite a number of so-called white papers or pamphlets of one kind or another. It has been a major effort with a lot of very compelling information in it. We hold meetings here and around the country that people are invited to. This subject is a strong topic.

If you want to organize a group of people and sponsor them, I can promise you that I would be glad to meet with them and others will be and give them the information we have. I have no hesitation about committing my time. I just cannot quite make it when it comes to the President's time. It's not that he would not meet with them. It's just that I cannot speak for his schedule.

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Senator PRESSLER. Well, it would help many of us out a lot if you could recommend to the President that such a meeting be held, at his level or at your level. I don't know how many people we are talking about here. If we are talking about bishops, I suppose it probably would be a couple of hundred.

For some reason, they are reaching opposite conclusions and I want you to be aware of that. It makes it a little tougher for people like me to vote for this, but it does not make it impossible.

I have requested in the form of a letter that personally the President get personally involved and that you get involved with that particular group of the American constituency.

Secretary SHULTZ. As I say, I cannot make a statement on behalf of the President, but I would be glad to talk to people. We talk to people all the time, endlessly about this.

Senator PRESSLER. Good.

Secretary SHULTZ. I cannot say that we persuade everybody. Some people come and their minds are absolutely closed. They just come to rail at you.

Senator PRESSLER. You are absolutely right. But I think this is one group that needs some public relations work from both the President and you, in my judgment, and I will do as much as I can.

I have a number of other questions that I will ask for the record.

My colleague and I both have a time problem so I will yield.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Senator Evans.

Senator EVANS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I would just say to my colleague from South Dakota, if he thinks he has problems, Seattle made Managua their sister city, and now they are going to vote this fall on being a sanctuary city, not just a sanctuary church.

So you've got it easy. [Laughter.]

Secretary SHULTZ. I hope they do not provide safe haven for the M-19 terrorists.

Senator EVANS. I don't know what comes next.

Secretary SHULTZ. Well, I think it ought to be pointed out to them.

You know, everybody says the President should sell people on this, that, and the other thing. But you are the representatives of people. If you are convinced that this is the right answer, you sell them.

Senator PRESSLER. Well, we try, but we don't have access to national TV, we don't have an Oval Office, and so forth. And we are not so persuasive as the President.

At least, I am not.

Senator EVANS. I have had some fascinating meetings, Mr. Secretary, with that same group, and I must say that we walked away from those meetings after several hours of interesting conversation, neither one having convinced the other. So, it probably will require more.

I could not help but comment on the chart of the fantastic escalation of armed resistence, especially after aid was cut off. I calculate that with about 3 years of no aid, and the armed resistance will be considerably larger than the Nicaraguan military. So, maybe that is the direction we ought to take.

Secretary SHULTZ. Are you serious about that?

Senator EVANS. No, I'm not serious.

Secretary SHULTZ. Is that a flip comment?

Senator EVANS. Oh, yes.

Secretary SHULTZ. Well, it's not a flip subject, really. It is a very serious subject.

The point is there would be more people on this chart if you gave them some support, and they had some shoes to wear and some uniforms to wear, and some medical supplies.

These are people who are trying to attain freedom and independence in their country. We have to consider, in the light of the kind of outfit this is that they are fighting against whether or not we are going to step in there behind them and help them.

That is what this is about, right here on our doorstep.

Senator EVANS. Mr. Secretary, even the humanitarian aid that has been given has not gotten to them.

Secretary SHULTZ. Well, we have described why that is.

Senator EVANS. I understand.

Secretary SHULTZ. We provided it in a way that made it very difficult to deliver. It is getting delivered and about all that we were able to obligate has been obligated.

Senator EVANS. Mr. Secretary, I am concerned about what happens next. Assume that there is a satisfactory response and Congress approves $100 million. It is given, gets there, and is utilizied, and the reaction from the other side is a corresponding escalation.

What would the next recommended step be from the administration? That is, the corresponding escalation would lead us essentially to the same point where we are now, with an inability to overthrow or to cause a positive response from the Sandinista Government. We have escalated, we have gone through a year, what would you ask for next?

Secretary SHULTZ. First of all, the Soviets seem to be pouring in military aid as rapidly as it can be absorbed right now. There is a major escalation in the first part of 1986 and it is very clear, and we have some documents that show the gameplan of the Nicaraguan Communists. Their game plan is to get themselves as strongly equipped as they can, right now, to get help for the opposition delayed and put off as best they can, and with this great superiority of equipment, against people who have no help, to wipe them out. That is their strategy.

That is why we have to ask and that is why the President feels so strongly about this.

Now, I cannot tell you how it is all going to come out. I don't know.

I know which side I am on. I know who the good guys and the bad guys are here. I am very comfortable with our posture. And I also observe that it is our side that is having people volunteer as fast as we can give them something to work with, and it is the other side that is having trouble getting people to serve in their armed force.

So I think maybe people in Nicaragua, when they see that there really is some support, may very well rally. But I cannot say that for sure. I don't know.

Senator EVANS. I agree with that. I don't think there is any question of knowing which side is the good guys and which is the bad guys, and what we hope to do with the aid we are giving. I am trying to carry it one step further, and I would hope that the administration has looked at alternative scenarios to try to determine step 2 after step 1. I know we did, at least from the briefings and the information I received on what could happen in the Philippines under a wide variety of circumstances. There were at least some policies and some strategies set forth for that. I am just curious as to what they would be in this case if escalation occurs and a year from now we are still facing very tough, continuing problems. Are we set for the course? Will the administration come in for another $100 million? Will it be $200 million? Or will we say enough is enough?

What direction will you take under those circumstances?

Secretary SHULTZ. Well, Senator Kerry mentioned, with approval, that the Nicaraguan Communists at least had been willing to sign up that they would not use nuclear weapons. That's great. I can tell you that if the Soviet Union wants to introduce nuclear weapons around here, there is going to be one hell of a reaction to it. And I doubt that there would be any quarrel around this committee with that.

So I do not regard that as much of an undertaking.

Senator EVANS. No. I would agree with you.

Secretary SHULTZ. But if you say if somebody ups the ante, what are we going to do, well, we are certainly not going to sit in our country and allow aggressors to really threaten us in an important way. I make that assumption.

Senator EVANS. But if we have upped the ante and it is still a stalemate.

Secretary SHULTZ. We have not upped the ante.

Senator EVANS. I said earlier, assuming that we do.

Secretary SHULTZ. When we took our ante off the table, they upped the ante, as I have tried to bring out in these debates.

Senator EVANS. I guess, like a poker game, each one puts it in at a different time, and we are putting ours in now, and if we are going to put it in, do we fold our cards at some point?

Secretary SHULTZ. We are very late. That is the fact of the matter. We are very late.

Senator EVANS. Let's look at another scenario.

I would presume that the hoped for reaction is one of response of the Sandinista Government to the kinds of actions we are seeking, such as the Contadora process taking place, a movement toward national reconciliation, and respect for such things as freedom of the press, religion, assembly and a cease-fire with the Nicaraguan Democratic Resistance.

It seems to me that that is a devoutly hoped-for reaction, but probably not an easy one to achieve. There are not very many examples of totalitarian governments around the world who have moved toward voluntarily giving up some share of their power.

If that does not happen, I presume one other alternative outcome would be the expansion of the resistance to the point where there is a popular uprising in Nicaragua and a change in government.

Is that one of the other alternatives?

Secretary SHULTZ. Yes, sir.

But I would say to you it is not a totalitarian state yet. That is what they are trying to achieve.

Senator EVANS. I understand that.

Secretary SHULTZ. They have not yet gotten there.

Senator EVANS. I stand corrected.

Secretary SHULTZ. So, therefore, it is timely to try to prevent the establishment of a totalitarian state right there, with the kind of support that it has, which constitutes a threat to us.

Senator EVANS. But if they do not react in that way, then, presumably, if the alternative, aid to the Contras, is going to be successful in anything more than just a continuation of current status, it would have to force the Sandinistas to move voluntarily in the direction we would like to see them move or to encourage the people of Nicaragua to the point of insurrection, and we would hope successful insurrection.

Secretary SHULTZ. I think, at least we assume that if the present government sees that it cannot win militarily, that it is losing its base of support, and that its best hope for retaining some part in the government of the country is to sit down and negotiate, that, under those circumstances, it will do it.

Senator EVANS. And if they don't?

Secretary SHULTZ. As a matter of fact, their reaction to various opportunities for negotiation over a period of time has been kind of in response to the difficulties that they faced, and when they didn't face much in the way of difficulties, they weren't very interested in negotiations. When they did find themselves faced with an opposition, first, you know, they would not take any part in the Contadora process, and then they came in when they found opposition, and they have been on-again/off-again about it and have called for a 6-month moratorium, and so on and so forth. So their behavior has been very erratic, and I think it has been keyed to the assessment of whether they can get their way without negotiations, just as happens in other instances.

Senator EVANS. I will followthrough, Mr. Chairman, with other questions of this kind.

I just want to let you know, Mr. Secretary, that I do want to work with the administration, with the Chairman, and with others on this committee and in the other House to reach what I suspect may now become a household word, a "Philippine solution," which I think we can categorize as unified and successful. I think that that is the best kind of solution to each of our foreign policy problems that we can hope for.

I know we will all like to see a successful solution. I fear that we are not yet at a unified solution.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Evans.

Senator Dodd.

Senator DODD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, you have been working off an assumption here for the last couple of hours on which I gather, for most of my colleagues here, there is general agreement. I may be the only one to dissent, but I did not want to have you leave here thinking it was unanimous.

I am concerned about the over-simplification of what is a very complex foreign policy issue into good guys and bad guys. I don't think there are many good guys down there at all. I don't think the Contras fall into that category. That is my own view.

Part of the problem, it seems to me, has been that we have had the President and others calling the Contras Jeffersonian democrats, and we have had others referring to the Sandinistas as some new order of Franciscan monks. Frankly, both observations are terribly simplistic. I think it makes it more difficult to really try to come up with intelligence solutions to this problem.

I recall the President saying in the debates of 1984, when asked about the Philippines, that if we did not support Marcos, the only alternative was the Communists. Well, we found that to be not quite the case. As we joyfully know today, there were other alternatives than just those two.

I would hate to think we have reached a conclusion in Central America on our own, unilaterally, that the only choice here is between Contras and Sandinistas. I would hope that we have not abandoned our creativity, particularly when we have just come off what I think most of us consider to be a highly successful foreign policy endeavor.

I will not repeat here again what I said earlier, but I do sincerely commend what occurred in the Philippines. It was intelligent, it was thoughtful, and it worked.

So I do not subscribe to the theory that the Contras are the good guys here. In fact, I would suggest that one of the problems is that this is sort of an elongated Bay of Pigs. In that situation, of course, the assumption was that when the Cuban exiles went into Cuba in 1961, there would be an instant uprising in support of that effort. It did not materialize.

In this situation, I don't think it is materializing either. I don't believe necessarily that the Nicaraguan people are enamoured with the Sandinistas. Nor do I think they are overly enthusiastic about the idea of the Contras, and, hence, one of the reasons we have not seen the groundswell of support that one normaly would expect with this kind of effort.

I would like to know, for instance, why it is that that aid that we did send down has not gotten there. Isn't it a fact that the Honduran Government does not want to provide it, does not want to provide the avenues of access? Isn't that true?

Secretary SHULTZ. That has been a problem for us.

Senator DODD. Why is that a problem?

We are providing Honduras with $250 million in aid.

Secretary SHULTZ. The reason why countries hesitate—and this is a general lesson for us—is that they are sitting there, next door, and there is a very large amount of military power arrayed against them, and so it is a problem for them on their own borders.

We have gotten our supply problem straightened out. It was mixed up in some other ways as well, as you probably know.

Senator DODD. Well, how much aid have we given, since 1981, to the Contras? I never really got a number. What is the ballpark number of assistance?

Secretary SHULTZ. Well, we have not given the $27 million yet. We have obligated almost $18 million, which is what we have been,

by statute, allowed to obligate so far, and now we will obligate the other $9 million. As for other assistance, I am not in a position to discuss it, and neither are you.

Senator DODD. Well, we would not be violating any secrets to say that it has not been insubstantial.

Secretary SHULTZ. No, it has not been very large at all, not compared with the Soviet Union.

Senator DODD. I meant "insubstantial." It has been sizable.

Secretary SHULTZ. No, it has not been sizable. But I am not going to discuss it.

Senator DODD. Can you tell us today about the conversations you had with the eight foreign ministers that came up? What were they telling you? What was their point? What are their reasons and rationale for encouraging an alternative policy to this one?

Secretary SHULTZ. Well, basically, the analysis of the situation that we had—and I don't want to speak for them—they had a rather similar view to mine about the nature of the problem. There is not a good word to be said for Nicaragua in their neighborhood or in South America—very little.

As a matter of fact, more and more around the world you are seeing people recognizing, just as it is going on in this country, the nature of the Nicaraguan regime. It is bad news. We often see that.

Senator DODD. But we are talking about a policy to deal with the problem.

Secretary SHULTZ. They see that problem and they would like to see a negotiated outcome. So would we.

The question is how do you get a negotiated outcome, and we believe the evidence is clear enough that you are not likely to have a fruitful negotiation if you have all of the power on one side and very little on the other side.

Senator DODD. Let me put it to you in this way.

Which countries in this hemisphere support this policy of providing the Contras with military assistance? Who agrees with us?

Secretary SHULTZ. People have great difficulty in making public statements in this regard, and they get criticized when they do.

For example, Foreign Minister Caputo in Argentina made a very strong statement recently. Clearly he was then attacked viciously by the communists in his country. So people see that. So I have had innumerable private conversations with heads of state and foreign ministers on this subject, and it is very clear to me where they stand.

Senator DODD. Well, then, there is an awful lot of confusion on it.

I am not talking about their concern about what the Sandinistas are doing. On that point, I think the concern, both internally and what they potentially can do externally, I don't think you have any argument on that.

My point earlier, the disagreement, is this categorization of good guy/bad guy situation which I think complicates it. I am talking about whether or not they believe in this policy. It is the policy we are debating.

Who agrees with this policy of supporting militarily the Contras—not whether or not there is any agreement or consensus on whether or not the Sandinistas pose potential threats? Which countries back us on this policy?

Secretary SHULTZ. As I have said repeatedly it is very difficult for countries to publicly take a position. However, in my conversations around privately, there is a very general view.

The same thing was true in Grenada. Nobody supported us except the Caribbean states right around there, on Grenada. And I don't recall getting a lot of warm support from the members of this committee on the day that we went to Grenada.

Senator DODD. Well, who are the countries here that support it?

Secretary SHULTZ. A few days later, people had a different view.

Senator DODD. Well, which countries here support us? You mentioned the neighboring Caribbean countries that supported us in Grenada. Which countries support this policy?

Secretary SHULTZ. I have answered that question already, about five times, namely, that it is very difficult for them to get up in public or in the OAS and vote. However, when you talk to them—you have had exactly the same experience I have, I am sure—they tell you what they believe.

Senator DODD. So, in other words, they are saying one thing publically and another thing privately?

Secretary SHULTZ. Some are.

Senator DODD. Well, I find that somewhat hard to believe.

I talked to them as well.

Secretary SHULTZ. I think it happens all the time. You know that very well.

Senator DODD. What is the present position of the Honduran Government with regard to the location of the Contras in Honduras? Has that been resolved? Are they going to accept those camps now?

Secretary SHULTZ. I think that we can make our program work, and that is as much as I care to say about it.

Senator DODD. All right.

Mr. Chairman, I will pass for now.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Dodd.

I will call upon Senator Biden, Senator Trible, and then Senator Kassebaum for a short question.

Senator Biden.

Senator BIDEN. Thank you.

Mr. Secretary, I have several questions, but first I would like to make one comment regarding the nature of this issue.

This issue, as I see it, is not a question, to repeat myself, of whether or not the United States has the right to intervene in the affairs of another sovereign nation because, given its nature, the Sandinista Government I do not think can hide behind the principle that Nicaragua's right to self-determination should be respected because, in fact, I do not think the people of Nicaragua today have self-determination.

Moreover, I believe the United States has the right and the responsibility not only to protect its geostrategic interests but also to promote liberty wherever it can do so effectively.

I recognize that the administration justifies its proposal on precisely the same grounds, as I understand it.

But the question that I believe is before the committee is will the administration's plan, in practical application, advance us toward the goals that have been articulated by you today.

I might say that I have seldom seen you as forceful and as articulate. You are always articulate, but you have left no doubt about where you stand on any of this today, at least from my perspective.

What I would like to ask you about is the practical application of the plan. I have three questions, if I have time to get them in within my time.

How confident are you that the Contras truly represent a democratic future for Nicaragua, and by what process do you see this democracy being brought into being, assuming the Contras were negotiated or militarily put themselves into the picture where they were part of the process.

How confident are you that they are the democratic future, the Contras?

Secretary SHULTZ. I feel quite confident that that is what they would want to do. They see what happens with the alternative. They fought against Somoza and now they are fighting against the Nicaraguan Communists. They are the same people. The Sandinistas are dictators, and they see that.

They also see in their neighborhood the sweeping force of democracy all around them, and that tends to be catching.

So, I think on that question I would feel reasonably confident.

Senator BIDEN. At this point, since I am no longer on the Intelligence Committee, I do not have any evidence to disagree with and I am inclined to believe your chart showing that the total of National Guard participation among FDN military leaders is down to 27 percent. I just would put a caveat here that you obviously would not put in the chart unless you acknowledge that it used to be much higher and that it is diminishing.

Assuming that to be the case, not for a response, but I would state my concern. Just as the Sandinistas were made up of a much more diverse group than they are now, I worry about the Contras ultimately, if they ever got into a position of being, in effect, taken over by or controlled by that small a percentage.

My second question is this.

The administration's request for $3 million exclusively for strengthening the observance and advancement of human rights seems to acknowledge, by implication, that there have been human rights problems, and very serious ones, on the Contra side of the equation as well as on the Sandinista side.

How would this $3 million be expended? What problem is it intended to address?

Secretary SHULTZ. Well, first of all, I think, as was brought out in response to the earlier question, in the Amnesty International report, the bulk of it was about human rights abuses by the Nicaraguan Communists.

Senator BIDEN. I am not arguing that.

Secretary SHULTZ. Mr. Abrams, who was our Assistant Secretary for Human Rights, I think can best address that.

Senator BIDEN. Now, I am not asking for comparative reasons here.

Mr. ABRAMS. Right.

There is no question that there have been human rights violations by the resistance forces. It is a guerrilla army, and that is a difficult situation in which to discipline troops.

The question is: How did they respond to that?

The way they have responded now is by setting up at the overall level of UNO under the command of Arturo Cruz, whose commitment on these issues I think is unquestionable, a human rights operation. The individuals who are running it under Cruz are people formerly associated in some cases with the Sandinistas, who left because of the human rights violations there, the Nicaraguan Red Cross, people with a really good record on human rights.

The money is spent on things like their salaries, on printing up informational material for the troops as to what they are permitted and not permitted to do. For example, a translation of ICRC materials which we have printed up——

Senator BIDEN. You'll talk to the CIA about this and their printing program, won't you?

Mr. ABRAMS. Well, we have printed up ICRC materials in Spanish to distribute. It is that kind of expenditure—investigatory expenses and looking into individual cases of human rights dispute.

Senator BIDEN. That is very helpful to me.

Before my 10 minutes is up, let me get to the next point, if I may, and thank you.

Your statement envisages that the Sandinistas, Mr. Secretary, being pressured to the bargaining table and then into power sharing, in fact, divesting themselves of power, because of the leverage exerted by our support of the Contras, indeed, the administration request allows for the possibility that it is possible—at least in your statement, your full statement—that this may be at hand even before the $100 million would be expended. As I understand it, it's $100 million to push them to the table; it's possible that they may get to the table before the $100 million is expended.

Now, what happens in the alternative? What happens if, after $100 million, we are no different than where we are now and nothing has changed? In what way do we up the ante?

Obviously, you have thought this thing through very well. Do you come back for more money or do you come back for a different kind of involvement?

What do you envision if it does not succeed, the $100 million?

Secretary SHULTZ. First of all, you asked a number of questions in your question, so let me take them one at a time.

First, we would not suggest that this internal dialog be about power sharing, but that it be about putting into place a process through which people can gain power in a legitimate way. So, you are saying you will take your chances with the Nicaraguan people if there is an open and free system as to who they would select, as distinct from direct bargaining for this or that post.

Senator BIDEN. May I stop you there?

I do not disagree with you, but I am not sure that that is not a distinction without a difference. We just laid out here clearly everyone saying what the Sandinistas are. Obviously, if they are as bad as we say they are, they are not going to submit themselves to the will of the people of Nicaragua.

So, in fact, what we are going to ask them to do is voluntarily, as a consequence of this pressure being put on them, give up that power. To say "submit yourself to the people" is the same as them

saying all right, we will agree to power sharing, or am I off on that?

Secretary SHULTZ. Well, I am inclined to agree with you that if the Nicaraguan people had a chance to vote for who they wanted to, they would not vote for their present government.

Senator BIDEN. I tend to agree with that.

Secretary SHULTZ. Really, that is the point of all of this. Maybe good guys and bad guys is an oversimplification. I agree with that. But, broadly speaking, that is a statement about——

Senator BIDEN. Bad guys and better guys.

Secretary SHULTZ. Well.

Senator BIDEN. I still have the green light, I see, and I appreciate your helping me on this.

The last question I would like to ask you——

Secretary SHULTZ. But I didn't answer your questions. I had just gotten to the first part of your multipronged question.

Senator BIDEN. You are absolutely right.

Secretary SHULTZ. Then you spoke about other uses for the $100 million.

Senator BIDEN. That's right.

Secretary SHULTZ. Certainly, we think it is a good carrot to put out there, that if these things that we would like to see come to pass before that money is expended, we will use it for reconstruction and so forth in the region.

Whether that is likely to come to pass or not you can argue about. But I think it is a perfectly good point.

Senator BIDEN. My question is what happens if you spend it all and it does not accomplish the result. What are you going to come back and ask us for next? You don't know, do you?

Secretary SHULTZ. I don't know the answer to that, what it will be like 18 months from now. I do know pretty clearly one answer, though, and that is if we fail, if we declare, as a country, that we will not help people who are fighting for freedom and independence in a country as close to us as Nicaragua when what they are fighting against can be characterized as we basically agreed here, the nature of that regime, if we declare we will not help them, I think the situation will fall apart in a hurry and what we will be faced with 18 months from now will be a very unpleasant situation.

Senator BIDEN. That gets me to my very last question, and in the nick of time.

The administration has four specific objectives. I will repeat them again: Soviet-Cuban presence, military buildup, subversion of Nicaragua's neighbors, and internal repression. Do you believe it is possible to achieve—let me put it another way and shorten it even more. Is there any way that your total objectives could be met short of the voluntary or physical overthrow of the present Sandinista government?

Secretary SHULTZ. Well, you have defined voluntary overthrow in an interesting way.

Senator BIDEN. Voluntary or overthrow. I mean voluntary, where they say they will submit to elections, or the physical overthrow of them.

Secretary SHULTZ. I believe that the things having to do with military levels and shipments of supplies and subversion in other

countries and so forth have to have adequate verification to mean anything, and that it is difficult to envisage adequate verification when the regime basically does not want to do those things. So, I think, without having some impact on the nature of the regime, it is hard to see that you can be very comfortable with the first three objectives.

In other words, they are intermixed, just as in the 21 objectives that all these countries, including Nicaragua agreed to. They agreed to these different things, and you cannot just pick them out one by one. They represent a set and they have to be looked upon as a set.

Senator BIDEN. My time is up.

I would like to pursue this further at another time.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Biden.

As the Chair mentioned before Senator Helms came in, we would recognize Senator Trible next and then Senator Kassebaum for one short question. We will stick to that order, and then will recognize Senator Helms. In case somebody else comes in, we will establish them then at that point.

We appreciate your graciousness.

Senator Trible.

Senator TRIBLE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, in the sessions that we have had in the White House and the sessions on Capitol Hill, you have answered my questions. I think you have met the questions today quite effectively.

I would simply add to what has gone on before by applauding you and applauding this administration for notable successes in Haiti and the Philippines, for the movement toward freedom and democracy in those countries. I must observe on this occasion that it seems to me that if we support the pursuit of democracy in those countries, then, surely, we ought to help those who are seeking freedom in our hemisphere in Central America.

I support this initiative and I hope that we succeed.

I will happily, I know, for the chairman, yield back the balance of my time.

Senator HELMS. Not to mention the Secretary.

Senator TRIBLE. As for the Secretary, I know that he will be the happiest.

The CHAIRMAN. I believe there is unanimous gratitude, Senator Trible. [Laughter.]

Senator Kassebaum.

Senator KASSEBAUM. Thank you.

I will be very brief, Mr. Secretary.

I was curious if you could give us a rough assessment of the combatant strength of the opposition that is not receiving U.S. aid.

Secretary SHULTZ. The opposition that is not receiving U.S. aid? Well, none of it is receiving any U.S. aid other than——

Senator KASSEBAUM. The Contras.

Secretary SHULTZ [continuing]. Food, clothing, and so forth. That is the only U.S. aid they are getting. And, as has been brought out, it is not very large.

Senator KASSEBAUM. But there are opposition forces, of course, that are not receiving anything.

I just wondered if you had an assessment of their combatant strength.

Senator SARBANES. Well, this is an effort to estimate—and the numbers are obviously approximate—what the armed resistance amounts to in terms of numbers. As I understand the estimate, it is in the neighborhood of 20,000 people.

Senator KASSEBAUM. That's not broken down between the Contras and others?

Secretary SHULTZ. The estimate is that there are another 10,000 who would join if there were any prospect of some help.

Senator KASSEBAUM. But that is not broken down between the north and the south, for instance?

Secretary SHULTZ. No; I think probably you can get that breakdown, though I don't know how desirable it is to publish a rough breakdown.

Senator KASSEBAUM. Well, that is why I asked you if there were a rough assessment that you could give.

Mr. ABRAMS. We are trying to extend the aid by working with all groups in the opposition. I would hope that within a matter of a couple of months the answer would be zero; that is, there won't be any groups who don't get some aid.

But I guess I would rather not go into our estimate of the exact numbers of combatants available to each group.

Senator KASSEBAUM. Is it not true that the Europeans are assisting some of the other groups?

Mr. ABRAMS. Well, I guess I should not answer that question in an open hearing.

Senator KASSEBAUM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Kassebaum.

Senator Helms.

Senator HELMS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I regret being late, but we have a little farm bill on the floor and I had to be over there.

Mr. Secretary, I have gotten a second hand report of your comments today and I want to commend you, sir. You have been forceful if my information is correct.

Let me go back just a second to the point that Senator Biden and perhaps others have raised. Maybe the best way to focus on it is to quote State Department Spokesman Redman, who said:

> The United States has no intention of seeking a military solution to the conflict in Nicaragua. Our assistance to the democratic resistance has been and will continue to be for the purpose of exerting pressure on the Sandinistas to come to the negotiating table.

That has a little bit of a familiar ring, dating back to Vietnam, because I think the turning point there was when the administration then took the position that there would be no military solution.

Now, I take it to mean that Mr. Redman was saying no involvement of U.S. troops in a military decision. Was that essentially what he meant?

Secretary SHULTZ. There is no plan to use United States military troops in Nicaragua.

I believe the position the President has is that we have people who are there and who want to fight for their freedom, and we

should help them. We should help them in all the ways that will make them effective.

Now, how would we like to see the situation resolved?

Well, the sooner it could be resolved in a manner that gives the people that we are supporting a chance to stand before the Nicaraguan people and see who gets supported, the better. Obviously the soonest conceivable way, whether it is likely or not, but at least conceivable, is through some kind of negotiation, as the President proposed whenever that was, last spring, when he proposed a church mediated process of reconciliation with a cease-fire. Of course, the Nicaraguan Communists, seeing that the opposition has very little support coming from the United States, has not been disposed to take up the offer.

But I might say that people have talked about nobody supports us. Well, a lot of people supported the President when he made that statement. But the Nicaraguan Communists did not support it.

Senator HELMS. Right.

The point is that we should not infer from Mr. Redman's statement, let alone the President's or yours, that we are even implicitly saying to the Contras, whom I admire very much, don't fight anymore for what you believe.

Secretary SHULTZ. No. On the contrary, we are saying with this program that we want to help them fight for what they believe in, and, at the same time, the proposal that they made that there be a cease-fire and an honest-to-goodness effort, through national, reconciliation to put together a different kind of constitutional arrangement the President has supported. And we continue to support it, and we would be delighted to see a negotiation for that purpose.

Senator HELMS. Parenthetically, I understand that you met Eden Pastora this afternoon.

Secretary SHULTZ. I don't know whether he is still here or not.

Senator HELMS. I think he is still here. Yes.

Secretary SHULTZ. Would you like to shake the hand of Senator Helms? If so, come on up here.

Senator HELMS. Oh, he's already shaken my hand. [Laughter.]

My question, Mr. Secretary, is do you intend to sit down with Mr. Pastora and talk about things? Are you willing?

Secretary SHULTZ. Of course.

Senator HELMS. Very well.

I am sure he will be glad to come at your convenience.

I see we have a quorum call on.

Mr. Secretary, I am not concerned only with the military subversion of the hemisphere by the Sandinistas, but with the narcotic problem as well.

Now, there is pretty good information which came to me from inside the administration that the Sandinistas are involved in drug trade with the Panamanian defense forces. If that information is correct, are you taking any steps to solve that problem growing out of that relationship?

Secretary SHULTZ. Well, I am not going to make any comments on Panama at this point.

However, we do have what is, in my view, incontrovertible evidence of the involvement of members of the Nicaraguan Government in drug trafficking.

But I am not in a position to comment on any links with Panama. I am just not knowledgeable.

Senator HELMS. You just don't want to discuss the Panama angle in that?

Secretary SHULTZ. I am not knowledgeable.

Senator HELMS. Sir?

Secretary SHULTZ. I am not knowledgeable about that.

Senator HELMS. My final question, Mr. Chairman, is this—because I know the Secretary has been here a great while.

I understand pretty reliably that there were some secret meetings in Cuba recently, involving General Noriega of Panama the Sandinistas and representatives of the Government of Honduras.

Are you aware of that meeting?

Secretary SHULTZ. No, sir.

Senator HELMS. Well, there is no point in asking you what was the purpose of that meeting if you don't know about it.

Secretary SHULTZ. I don't know about it, but that does not mean it didn't take place. My days are full. I don't know about everything, I'm afraid.

Senator HELMS. I understand.

Mr. Pastora, you'd better get your bid in for a meeting with the Secretary of State.

Secretary SHULTZ. Oh, he won't have any trouble.

Senator HELMS. Good.

I thank you, Mr. Secretary.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Helms.

Mr. Secretary, I have just three questions.

First of all, is it possible that other nations might help us in this endeavor? More specifically, is it possible that European nations or Japan or Canada could become interested in the problems that we face in Central America, in this hemisphere? Many have been interested in a way, in terms of their foreign policy debates. But has there been an approach made to other nations who might be willing to share a portion of the financial or even the diplomatic burden that we are undertaking?

Secretary SHULTZ. Other nations are very interested in the Central American situation, and some have been critical of us and some more favorable.

On the whole, the trend has been very much in the direction of seeing the problem more or less as we do. I think the developments broadly in Central America have been welcomed and more and more countries have come to the side of El Salvador, for example.

Insofar as help with military assistance, say, to the United Nicaraguan Opposition, that is one of those subjects where those who might be willing to help get scared off if they think it is going to be publicized. So it is very hard to handle in a hearing like this.

The CHAIRMAN. Very well.

You have described a situation in which, for some reason, the Congress does not give the aid that the administration has requested as one in which things would fall apart rapidly.

Without getting into a situation in which we overstate the case, can you describe, as graphically as possible, what your expectation would be if, as of March 31, the Congress does not act favorably?

What can we anticipate, let's say, in the balance of 1986 in Nicaragua or in Central America?

Secretary SHULTZ. I would hope that we could have action from the Congress before that date. But, just in terms of that precise date, if we are moving forward clearly, I don't think things will fall apart.

On the other hand, I think, if it becomes clear on an up or down vote, which is the way this is structured—there is a program there and the Congress either supports it or does not support it, it is not to be fussed around with—and the decision is that the U.S. Government will not support those people, it will be difficult for them to keep going. Obviously, we will try to help them keep going in any way that we are permitted to. But it would undoubtedly be very disheartening.

I would not want to make a self-fulfilling prophecy because, even if you turn us down, we'll still fight, we'll still try. But it certainly would be very, very discouraging. I really cannot imagine that we would decline to help people under these circumstances.

The CHAIRMAN. Let me project one further thought about that.

The discovery by our intelligence people of Russian troops in Cuba came at a delicate point in terms of the SALT II debate in the Congress. As I recall, the chairman of this committee at that time indicated that those troops would have to be removed from Cuba before SALT II could be ratified.

Secretary SHULTZ. Are you talking about Russian troops in Cuba?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, that's right—the Soviet troops on Cuban soil.

President Carter stated the same thing. But the Soviets stayed and are still there and SALT II did not proceed, of course.

If, hypothetically, in this particular situation the Congress does not act favorably on the administration's request and the regime in Managua should escalate matters further by, say, allowing the installation of Soviet nuclear weapons on Nicaraguan soil, I would think that there would be a reaction by this country.

Let's say that——

Secretary SHULTZ. That was a far-out thing. I don't think it is a serious issue. Or I would hope not, because it is so clear what would result.

But Senator Kerry brought it up, so I just used it as an example.

The CHAIRMAN. I understand that. But it seems to me that you are arguing that if pressure is not exerted on the Sandinistas, then they may be inclined to really test out the limits of our tolerance. For example, short of permitting the stationing of nuclear systems on their soil, they might be inclined to opt for 2,000 Soviet trainers, such as we have already observed in Cuba.

At that point, the administration could well come to the Congress and ask what action the Congress would be inclined to support in reaction to the Soviet presence.

At that stage we might find ourselves wishing that we had a Contra option with which to confront the enhanced Soviet presence.

Secretary SHULTZ. But they won't be around anymore once you have pulled the plug. That's one of the problems.

The CHAIRMAN. They might not.

At that point, we might face an even more onerous policy dilemma—namely, whether we are going to introduce an American military presence in reaction to increased Soviet activities or simply adopt the position that these are merely trainers who happen to wear Soviet uniforms.

Secretary SHULTZ. They are agricultural advisors.

The CHAIRMAN. Or teachers, or health officials, or airfield construction engineers in Grenada.

Secretary SHULTZ. There are, Mr. Chairman, some 300 I think Soviets in country now. They have been constructing airfields and port facilities that are of a size that will take advanced aircraft and provide good port facilities, both in the Atlantic and the Pacific.

So they are developing an infrastructure that is there to receive more than comes in right now.

The CHAIRMAN. The point I am trying to make, Mr. Secretary, as part of our ongoing debate in the Congress, is that those who are unwilling to support the administration request ought to propose some policy alternatives. One alternative may be more money, as you suggested. Perhaps that is what you expected from the Congress—that you were not asking for enough money to get the job done.

Secretary SHULTZ. I was hoping I would come up here and everybody would pound on me for being too modest about this. I am bitterly disappointed. [Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. In the event that, downstream, Soviet trainers or nuclear systems arrive on Nicaraguan soil, the congressional reaction would be much more predictable. There would be pressure to send in the army and the navy to clean the thing up. Escalation of the American commitment is often times easier when the adrenalin is flowing.

The present situation and administration proposal is a "tougher sell." The administration is saying in essence that it does not want American forces committed but rather wishes to expend $100 million over 18 months to assist groups of individuals to persist in a struggle toward the realization of democratic principles.

I think it is a very important proposal and I appreciate your candor and willingness to lay it before us conversationally as well as in formal testimony. It is a critical test.

Let me just say at this point that I want to recognize Senator Biden and we are in the middle of a vote. In fact, we are 5 minutes into the vote.

Senator, would you like to take some more time?

Senator BIDEN. Yes, I would if I could—not a lot. Just another 5 or 10 minutes maximum.

The CHAIRMAN. How about your vote?

Senator BIDEN. If I leave the Secretary will be gone. So I guess I can't——

Secretary SHULTZ. I'll sit here. I believe in voting, so I will sit here while you vote.

The CHAIRMAN. If you would, we would apologize to you.

Secretary SHULTZ. I don't know how you are going to vote.

Senator BIDEN. I'll vote whatever way you want on this one, Mr. Secretary, as long as you stay. [Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Secretary, we will recess for 5 minutes. We will both try to vote and come back immediately.

Senator BIDEN. The issue is television in the Senate. How would you vote on that? How shall I vote?

Should I exercise my own judgment on this one?

Secretary SHULTZ. Vote it down. It's a lousy idea. [Laughter.]

[A brief recess was taken.]

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Secretary, Senator Biden will be here in just a moment. He was en route as I was coming back and would like to ask some questions. I think those will be the final questions. We appreciate very much your staying with us throughout this hearing.

Secretary SHULTZ. Well, it is an important subject. It is my chance to put the President's case forward.

The CHAIRMAN. Let me just note for you and for all who are attending the hearing that it is our intention to have another hearing. I believe it is to be held next Tuesday, and public witnesses will be heard.

The Chair has asked members of the committee to be available at some time during the week for an informal meeting, in which we will think together about this entire question. Then we anticipate that a markup will occur a week from Tuesday, at which time our judgment about the matter will be formulated.

That, at least, is our roadmap for the moment.

Senator Biden.

Senator BIDEN. Thank you.

I will be very brief, Mr. Secretary.

Let me tell you that I voted for the right of the public to see us make fools of ourselves when we filibuster in the Senate. That was the issue.

I can tell by your latter two responses to me that I think you have concluded that I am not trying to play games with you. I am trying to get down to the thing which for me is the most critical part of whether or not I support this issue.

I did not quite formulate it in my mind until I was walking back, speaking with the chairman.

Senator Helms is a very straightforward and articulate fellow. He makes it clear where he is on a lot of issues. In this case, my real concern is whether the administration—and I don't want you to answer this. This is just so you will know where I am coming from with a question about that—whether the administration is where you appear to be or whether it is where Senator Helms wants you to be. It resolves itself in the following way for me.

On the issue of whether or not it is acceptable under any circumstances to have a government in the hemisphere that calls itself Communist or is made up of Marxists, it is clear to Senator Helms, that no matter what they were doing, that is bad, a bad idea, and we should do whatever we need to do to remedy that.

It seems to me that you are saying something slightly different, and that is that you cannot envision a circumstance under which the first three of your objectives could be met with a government in power that had the ideological disposition this one had. But you at least seem to offer the prospect that that could be possible.

I was not being facetious before when I said that it is our view that the Soviets do not have a desire to do anything other than have superiority over the United States in nuclear arms, yet we acknowledge the prospect, at least, that there could be a verifiable arms control agreement with the makeup of the Soviet Union being the same as it is—otherwise we would not be negotiating with them. We do not expect the nature of their government to change; yet, we hold out the prospect that it is possible to have a verifiable arms control agreement with them.

I want again to ask you if you acknowledge the possibility that there could be a negotiation which resulted in the Sandinistas staying in power—that is not my desire—but they stay in power and yet we are able to independently verify that the Soviet-Cuban presence and the military buildup and interference among their neighbors had ceased.

Secretary SHULTZ. I think it is very difficult to verify because it is a tremendous effort. If you say the circumstances are that you are going to verify something that people really do not want—everything they have said is that this is not a result they want—and now you are going to try to verify whether the undertakings are being carried out, you have to put into place a mechanism that is quite extensive. It has to be carried out over a long period of time, and it is difficult to conceive that that is possible; whereas, if there is genuine good faith all around and, nevertheless, people feel some verification is necessary, you can feel a little bit more comfortable about it, and it is a more practical and reasonable thing to expect.

So, it has seemed to me that these things go together.

Now, people say that those who are now running Nicaragua will never agree to anything sensible. Well, that may be true.

I say we should find out, and the way to find out is, on the one hand, to have the strength to help those who want to fight for freedom and independence do so effectively with real prospects, and, at the same time, to put on the table for everybody to see what at least we would consider reasonable propositions. The test of whether they are reasonable or not is a test we have to apply. We cannot get into a position of saying we have to have things that they think are reasonable, as long as we think they are right and proper. Then we will just have to see.

We have seen many instances in history of groups that were thought to be quite intransigent finding themselves in a position where a change in position would be to their advantage compared with a situation they found themselves in, and they make a change.

So, I don't rule it out. But if you said, "I'm Jimmy the Greek, what are the odds." Well, you would have to give me pretty good odds before I will bet on it.

But I think it is possible and we should be prepared for it.

Senator BIDEN. The last question I have concerns Mr. Pastora, who has been introduced to us.

It is my understanding that those whom he represents have not been the recipients of our largesse. Would that change under this proposal? I am not asking that it should. I just want to know.

Secretary SHULTZ. I think we should be supporting all of those who are working in a broad way for the ends that we support and that they support. He falls into that category, in my opinion.

Now, it is not the easiest thing in the world to move this aid around under present circumstances, as has been brought out, and it has been a halting kind of process.

But we are getting better at it and I think, under the circumstances envisaged, it ought to be a little easier to do.

Senator BIDEN. I thank you, Mr. Secretary, and would suggest that on a number of these items, where it has been drawn, at least by some, as the Congress having one view and the administration a totally different view, and that the Congress has been meddling, I would suggest that the possibility exists—I would argue that, in fact, it is there—but the possibility exists that one of the reasons why the number of National Guardsmen has decreased, one of the reasons why Duarte is President now, one of the reasons now some of the things that have happened indeed happened is because there has been some friction. Friction produces sometimes positive results, a more polished stone.

I am hopeful we may be able to polish that stone a little bit more.

I would yield and would thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Biden.

I appreciate very much what Senator Biden has just said. As he has indicated, we had a conversation en route from the Senate floor.

I made the point, without telling tales out of school——

Senator BIDEN. About what a wonderful Senator I was. That was the point he made.

The CHAIRMAN. I pointed that out as a starter.

Secretary SHULTZ. Would you say that on television? [Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. That was the starter. Then I proceeded to the thought that the issue of an appropriate policy toward Nicaragua is one that is likely to be with us for some time—during the remainder of my chairmanship, during the committee chairmanship of Senator Pell should that come to pass, during the current administration and perhaps into the next. In short, each one of us needs to make the best of the situation while the mantle of responsibility rests on our shoulders.

We are facing an incremental process. To permit the continuance of a gap between commitment and policy is to burden whomever assumes responsibility with a much more difficult predicament down the road.

I think we have some common understanding about that. This is the cornerstone of any bipartisan cooperation because we will all inherit in one form or another some responsibility for this commitments/policy gap.

With that sober thought, let me just indicate that after this meeting is concluded, Senator Pell and I would like to visit with you, Mr. Secretary, for just a moment in the back room. If we could have a private moment with you, we would appreciate that.

We thank you very much for your patience and that of your staff who have come today.

This has been a good hearing.

This hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 5:10 p.m., the hearing was adjourned, subject to call of the Chair.]

U.S. POLICY TOWARD NICARAGUA

TUESDAY, MARCH 4, 1986

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met at 10:05 a.m., in room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Richard G. Lugar (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Lugar, Kassebaum, Pressler, Trible, Pell, Biden, Dodd, and Kerry.

The CHAIRMAN. This hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee is called to order.

As I mentioned in my introductory remarks at the first hearing on this subject with Secretary Shultz last Thursday, I believe it is our duty to hear all points of view on this question and to assist the administration in crafting an approach adequate to the difficult choices that we have before us in Nicaragua.

We cannot ignore the criticisms of past policy or the means we have used to implement it.

On the other hand, we cannot leave the United States without a realistic strategy for dealing with the serious situation that is developing in Nicaragua.

As I have also stated on other occasions, I believe that we all have the same objectives—a democratic Nicaragua that lives in peace with its neighbors and enjoys a good relationship with the United States of America.

The question is how do we get there from here.

Before us is the administration's proposal. We are privileged to have with us today four experts on the Nicaraguan situation to help us evaluate it.

Our first panel will consist of Mr. John Silber, president of Boston University and a former member of the Kissinger Commission, and Mr. Peter Bell, senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and former president of the Inter-American Foundation.

The second panel will be comprised of Mr. Robert Leiken, also a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment, and Dr. Wayne Smith, a former Foreign Service officer, now teaching at the School of Advanced International Studies of Johns Hopkins University.

We are hopeful that each panel will last about an hour this morning, and I would appreciate it if each of the panelists would restrict opening statements to 5 or 10 minutes so that there will be ample time for questions from our colleagues.

When my distinguished colleague, Senator Pell, the ranking member, arrives, I will ask him if he has an opening statement.

At this moment, I would like to ask Senator Kassebaum if she has opening comments or a statement.

Senator KASSEBAUM. No, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

It is a very real privilege to have both Mr. Silber and Mr. Bell here this morning.

Gentlemen, I would ask you to proceed, Mr. Silber first, with your opening comments and then to be prepared for questions from our panel.

Mr. Silber.

STATEMENT OF JOHN R. SILBER, PRESIDENT, BOSTON UNIVERSITY

Mr. SILBER. Thank you, Senator Lugar.

I am very pleased to have this opportunity of addressing the Foreign Relations Committee on this important topic of support for the Contras in Nicaragua.

Before getting into my direct testimony, I think some philosophical comment on the relation of means to ends is important. It will help clarify what I consider to be two myths and two confusions that have distorted our policy in Nicaragua.

The distinction between means and ends is fundamental. If I could take the example of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge: it was built to provide transportation from one side of a body of water to the other. The means that was selected was a bridge. It could have been a ferry: it could have been a group of helicopters—There are a wide variety of means that could have accomplished this result. But the means that was selected was a bridge.

After it was designed, in a large and heavy windstorm, the Tacoma Narrows Bridge blew all to pieces.

Now, at that point, the means to that end did not work, and no one dreamed of rebuilding that bridge on precisely the original design. They recognized that the means was not a means to transportation, but a means to disaster. The bridge was redesigned so that it stands today as a very different structure.

In politics and in foreign policy, we must be mindful of the same distinction between means and ends. Means are multiple and they have to be continually reevaluated. Any time we lock on to means and become so attached to them that we think of them as ends, we subject ourselves to grave mistakes and errors. That, I think, is what has been done by many liberal Democrats with regard to the issues in Central America.

I come before you today as one who considers himself a liberal Democrat in the tradition of FDR, Truman, and Kennedy. All of those Democrats were committed to the goal of democracy, just as every member of the Foreign Relations Committee is committed to the goal of democracy. From time to time, a variety of means has been chosen by liberals to achieve that end of democracy. One of those—and it was formative, I believe, in the minds of this generation—was that in order to preserve democracy, we had to oppose

totalitarian governments. We were as opposed to totalitarian government as we were in favor of democracy.

At a critical and formative time for our generation, we made an alliance with the Soviet Union and with Communists to defeat Hitler; as a consequence of that, there has been a continual habit of mind that associates Communist movements with liberal movements and believes that the Communists are aiding and abetting us in the cause of ridding the world of dictatorship. But, as a matter of fact, as subsequent history has shown—though it had not shown us this by the thirties—the Communists are as concerned and committed to dictatorship as anyone else. They have no time for or interest in enhancing democracy. In the long run, they are not interested in human welfare.

It is time that Democrats recognize that we have tended to identify a means with an end, or to make an end out of a means. The goal of supporting communist causes is not a satisfactory goal. It does not aid us in supporting democracy, but rather aids in the spread of totalitarianism.

Now, I want to be specific about how I think this confuses the issue of Nicaragua.

We are blinded by the myth that the Sandinistas are really idealists who were driven into the hands of the Cubans and the Soviet Union because of the hostility of the United States. There is not a shred of evidence to support this point of view. There is overwhelming evidence against it, and yet the myth continues.

All we have to do is examine the historical record and we find that when the Carter administration was in power, it withdrew support from Somoza. After its support was withdrawn, the entire country was in opposition to Somoza. His government was described to us on the Kissinger Commission as a kleptocracy, as government by theft—all classes and groups in Nicaragua were opposed to it. When the revolution was over, a complex government, including democratic elements as well as Communist elements, was assembled. Many of the people who are today members of UNO—the opposition to the Sandinistas—were members of that government. Cruz, Chamorro, Robelo, Calero, Pastora, and other democratic leaders were included in the original junta or in government positions with the Sandinistas.

The Sandinistas came to Washington, and, far from being received coldly, they got a friendly reception and received $117 million of aid. No administration could have been more supportive of the Sandinista regime than the Carter administration in the months that followed the revolution. These facts alone should discredit, once and for all, the myth that the United States drove the Sandinistas into the arms of Moscow.

The record is equally clear that the Sandinista leadership were Marxists-Leninists long before the revolution. They have proclaimed themselves such. Why should we deny it?

Tomas Borge was a Communist when he was a student. He supported that cause for over 20 years before the revolution. In saying this, I am not "Red-baiting." I am simply repeating what Tomas Borge has said of himself.

Bayardo Arce, one of the Sandinista leaders, has declared his contempt for the democratic process and has described the faked elections of 1984 as simply a concession to imperialism.

Humberto Ortega, the brother of the president and the minister of defense has said, and I quote: "Without Sandinismo, we cannot be Marxist-Leninists, and without Marxism-Leninism, Sandinistas cannot be revolutionary; that is why both go inseparably bound together."

It would be interesting to know what the staunchly anti-Communist Augusto Cesar Sandino would have made of this formulation by those who have appropriated his name.

We should take Ortega and his associates seriously. They proclaim their Leninism, and I don't see why we can't accept them at their word.

Leninism is irretriveably, irrefragably opposed to democracy. The Sandinistas are dedicated Leninists and committed opponents of democracy. For 5 years of their regime, they resisted all demands for free elections, cynically breaking the pledge they had made to the Organization of American States. Under their regime, they have imposed censorship on the press and television, they have harassed free trade unions, they have persecuted religion, they have subjected all aspects of the economy to a control that is barely distinguishable from state ownership, they have molested and persecuted the Miskito Indians, and, last October 15, they came up with a proclamation suspending the few civil rights left to Nicaraguans, including rights of movement and departure.

In substance and in style, the October 15 proclamation of the Sandinistas is indistinguishable, I submit, from the February 1933 proclamation, by which Hitler brought an end to the democracy of the Weimar Republic.

Now, none of us would dream of lending support to the Hitler regime that brought an end to the Weimar Republic; and, yet, apparently we can see no similarity between that destruction of democracy and the destruction of democracy perpetrated by Daniel Ortega and his associates in the October 14 proclamation.

Hitler well understood what rights he had to destroy in order to consolidate his tyranny. The Sandinistas, on the evidence of their own behavior, are no less astute and no less ruthless. Indeed, Ortega's list of rights abolished is even more comprehensive than Hitler's in 1933.

Archbishop Obando y Bravo, who has had extensive experience with this regime and who was no friend of Somoza—in his memoirs, Samoza regards Obando y Bravo as one of his staunchest opponents—has said of this regime, "this government is totalitarian."

It is time, I submit, for Americans of both parties to unite in rejecting the myth that the Sandinistas are democrats and were made reluctant tyrants by the United States, and that they will again be democrats if only we give them the chance.

This is simply false. If we do not confuse ourselves by the notion that because they are Communists, they are liberal; and if we do not make the mistake of supposing that communists are supporting democracy, we will see the Sandinistas quite clearly and get rid of this myth.

The second myth is that the Contras are Somocistas trying to restore the old order.

Some people in the Contras have been former members of the National Guard—that is true. But the leadership of the United Nicaraguan Opposition [UNO], the political arm of the fighting forces, is impeccably anti-Somocista. Arturo Cruz was so clearly anti-Somocista that he was the Sandinista Ambassador to the United States after having been their minister of finance.

Alfonso Robelo and Adolfo Calero both opposed Somoza before his fall, and the former spent time in Somoza's jails for his opposition.

As for the Contra field commanders, some of them did serve under the National Guard under Somoza. Among these is Enrique Bermudez, the Contra Commander-in-Chief. Service in the guard did not make them Somocistas, and they are certainly not Somocistas today.

On the other hand, it is clear that the Sandinistas have welcomed former members of Somoza's National Guard into the Sandinista army, where they hold command positions. I note Modesto Roja, the vice commander of the air force. Sandinistas make an extensive use of former Somocistas as coordinators of the Block Committees, those devastating committees that are proven weapons in the imposition of a totalitarian control. The Block Committees are a device that was taken over from Hitler, used by the Communists in East Germany, and transported by them, through Cuba, to Nicaragua.

The former National Guardsmen of the Contras are responsible and answer to a political leadership that is firmly democratic and firmly committed to human rights and the rule of law.

By contrast, the National Guardsmen serving the Sandinistas assist in imposing on Nicaragua a tyranny that, in fact, exceeds the tyranny that was imposed by Somoza.

There is also general agreement that the rank and file of the Contras, far from being Somocistas, are angry peasants and Indians, fighting a regime that they find intolerably oppressive. Most of them were children at the time Somoza was in power. The great majority are under 25 years of age today. They were only children at the time of Somoza's fall, and their verdict on the Sandinista regime is devastating.

With regard to the claims of human rights violations by the Contras: we have had the demonstration by several witnesses of the distortions that go into making up those reports. We know that the Sandinistas in the Ministry of Interior have faked these activities. We know that they have engaged in large-scale atrocities themselves, with soldiers dressed as Contras. We know also that some violations of human rights have occurred by the Contras.

But it is very interesting to see the difference. When a violation of human rights by a Contra occurs, he is punished, or there is a serious attempt to find out who is at fault and to bring them to justice. The UNO opposes human rights violations. There is no such effort among the Sandinistas. The Sandinistas do not recognize our concept of human rights or a rule of law, and, consequently, they do not care about such violations at all. Indeed, they manufacture them, and they sell them through their public relations

agency in New York and work very effectively all over Washington and through the media to try to build a false picture.

I think it is more important for us to note what the policy of the United Nicaraguan Opposition on human rights and democracy is. They state it plainly in their declaration of June 12, 1985, issued from San Salvador and signed by Calero, Cruz, and Robelo. They pledge that there would be an internationally supervised election within one year of taking power. Moreover, they pledged that the rule of law will protect the inviolability of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

This is the position of the Contras. There is no such position among the Sandinistas. The violation of human and civil rights by the Sandinistas, including cases of official torture and murder of civilians documented by Amnesty International, is not an aberration from policy. It is the very stuff of Leninist oppression.

The Sandinistas' contempt for democracy and human rights is well summed up in their suspension of rights and liberties by the decree of October 15.

Now, some argue that whatever justice there may be in the cause, the Contras are simply too few and too small to win.

But this judgment flies again in the face of history and in the face of present reality. The armed opposition to Somoza numbered about 3,000. Fidel Castro, himself, entered Havana and took over with about 1,000 followers, and the Contra forces now already number in excess of 20,000. That is more than six times the size of the prerevolutionary Sandinista force.

The Contras have gained expert support in these matters. Huber Matos, the key aid to Fidel Castro in the Sierra Maestra, has said the following:

> I was able to confirm the support and popularity of the FDN [The Nicaraguan Democratic Front] among the local population, something I previously had only assumed. No guerrilla force can make progress if it does not have popular support. . . . Practically the whole guerrilla army [in Nicaragua] is made up of peasants. . . . The FDN has more volunteers than it can handle.

It is important, Mr. Chairman and Madam Senator, that we not be trapped by prior conclusions and attitudes that are shaped in Managua and sold in Washington by high-priced public relations firms. It is important that we know the current facts so that we do not find ourselves behind the learning curve or behind the shifting power curve in Nicaragua.

Edward R. Sheehan, in a series of articles on the Nicaraguan situation for the "Boston Globe" has written, and I quote:

> I arrived in Central America with the conventional liberal wisdom that the Contras, through their past links to the Argentine colonels and the CIA, . . . were a reactionary right-wing force. After nearly a week with them, I modified this preconception. . . . The troops are an army of simple Nicaraguan peasants of no ideology save their ardent Catholicism. . . . They are an army of children. . . . I consider the military Contras an authentic national liberation force.

This is from a man whose views were totally turned around by his experience in the field.

This is what is necessary. We have to learn from the evidence and not be locked into an ideological identification of the Sandinista movement with liberation.

It is clear that the Contras, far from trying to restore Somocismo, are fighting for the democratic objectives for which the revolution was originally fought.

In my opinion, Republicans and Democrats, who are united in the belief that democracy should prevail everywhere, should support those fighting for democracy in Nicaragua.

I find it a grave inconsistency that liberals who pride themselves on their devotion to democracy can identify themselves with the Sandinista movement, or refuse to identify themselves with the Contras who are fighting for the objectives of democracy.

When the myths that I have been discussing are dispelled, we cannot fail to see that it is the Contras, not the Sandinistas, who are fighting for democracy.

Beyond dispelling these myths, there are two confusions that afflict our Nicaraguan policy. The first is the belief that we should not support an ally unless the ally is perfect. The second is—and it is implicit in all of our discussion of Nicaragua—that a fire that is small and easily can be put out poses no threat to the security of a house.

As long as the Soviet-Cuban threat is there in the region, we shall be compelled to support governments and movements that are independent of the Soviet Union and Cuba, even if they are not so democratic or supportive of human rights as we would like.

We face a tragic limitation in our moral choice because we do not always have the option of choosing between unmixed good and unmixed evil. It is not merely morally acceptable to support the lesser of two evils—in my opinion it is morally obligatory. How else can we explain the sordid alliance we made with Josef Stalin in the Second World War? The only excuse we can have, either at the time or in hindsight for having linked our forces with the forces of Josef Stalin was that Hitler was the greater of two evils at that time.

The fact that we made this alliance with the communists and with Josef Stalin should not leave us in the habitual frame of mind of believing that when we ally ourselves with communists, we are doing something good—that somehow we are opposing totalitarian or supporting democracy. We cannot be caught up in such regimented and arcane thinking.

Who, for example, right now would abandon the Shah of Iran in favor of the Ayatollah? It was very easy at the time to find out that the Shah was no good. But who stopped to think that if the Shah were gone, there would be somebody even worse.

We have to consider these possibilities if we want to be moral in our foreign policy. We are never going to be perfect in our foreign policy because we do not live in a perfect world.

In Central America, democracy is on the march. Democrats are on the march—imperfectly, stumbling, awkwardly, but on the march.

Since the Kissinger Commission completed its report only 2 years ago, El Salvador has had two elections, Honduras one, Guatemala three. The recent election for president in Guatemala, the first stage of which I was privileged to observe, along with the chairman of this committee, was fair and open by any standards. I do not be-

lieve there was a more honest election ever held in the United States.

Yet, in 1983, the Kissinger Commission found Guatemala the least fertile soil for democracy in Central America. Now, 2 years later, Guatemala is legitimately democratic. It has an elected government and it was a model election.

We, clearly, underestimated the latent democratic forces that have come swiftly to the fore. And we have to remember that the success in Guatemala would have been impossible without the support of General Mejia and the army.

We have become so knee-jerk in our attitudes toward generals and toward armies that we frequently fail to recognize that they, too, can be supporters of democracy—as were the military leaders under Marcos, who withdrew their support from Marcos and made possible the victory of Corazon Aquino.

All of these changes are important for us to observe. Had we abandoned Guatemala because of its military leadership and because its institutions were deeply flawed, we would have encouraged the Communist insurgents and we would have substantially delayed the coming of democracy to Guatemala.

Guatemala is a textbook example of why the United States, rejecting counsels of perfection, should work with the most democratic forces available, however flawed.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Silber, could you bring your testimony to a conclusion in a moment or two, so that we may continue.

Mr. SILBER. Yes, sir; I have one final point.

There is the mistaken belief that we do not face a present risk in Nicaragua. We must overcome that misunderstanding by a review of recent history.

Hitler was not a risk in 1933. He was not a serious risk in 1935. In 1936, after he rearmed the Rhineland, he could still have been removed with very little effort.

But we all decided that the fire was not worth putting out until 1939, and in 1939, it required 6 years and tens of millions of lives to put out that fire.

There is a small fire in Central America right now, in Nicaragua, and that fire can be put out very easily. We are not even asked to send in the firemen. We are simply asked to help pay for the firemen. It seems to me that that is the least we can do.

The Contras deserve our help, they need our help, and I think we must help them.

Mr. Chairman, I testify today as a Democrat who believes in bipartisanship. I recall very well the way in which Republicans and Democrats united behind Harry Truman in the Truman doctrine that preserved the liberty and democracy of Greece. I also recall the bipartisan support that was given President Kennedy when, after the missile crisis, he asserted that we would not allow further exportation of insurgency and revolution from Cuba.

But we have not lived up to these resolutions, and now our bipartisanship is badly flawed. I think we should call on the memory of Vandenberg, who changed from an isolationist to a supporter of a policy that was united toward a worldwide defense of democracy, and that we should follow the example of President Kennedy. These are Republicans and Democrats that we need to hold up as

ideals and models today. If we do, I think we will have to conclude that the President is correct.

The threat in Nicaragua is not immediate and can be removed by prompt and resolute action on the part of the United States to support the democratic opposition there. The forces fighting for freedom in Nicaragua do not want American troops to do the job for them. They do want, need, and deserve American arms and other supplies.

In the past month, we have seen the fall of dictators in Haiti and the Philippines. By supporting aid for the forces of the United Nicaraguan Opposition, the Senate has the opportunity to help add Daniel Ortega and his fellow dictators to that list.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Silber.

Mr. Bell.

STATEMENT OF PETER D. BELL, SENIOR ASSOCIATE, CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE

Mr. BELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

It is a privilege to appear before this distinguished committee on this important issue.

At the very outset, let me say that my opposition to communism is second to none. I have no illusions about the nature of the Sandinista regime. I hope that it is not necessary to express my support for democracy. I have never received a cent from a public relations firm, nor do I obtain my information about Central America from such firms.

It seems to me the basic questions before the committee this morning are questions of being clear about what our ends are in Central America and about what would be effective means to achieve those ends.

For nearly 25 years, I have had a deep and abiding interest in United States-Latin American relations, an interest which, over the last few years, has increasingly taken me to Central America. I was most recently there with Governor Bruce Babbitt of Arizona for 9 days in early January. In Panama and then in Costa Rica, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala, we talked with leaders in government and opposition, business and labor, church and human rights, about how most effectively to resume the search for peace in the region.

I left more convinced than ever of the need to support the Condatora group and the Central American countries themselves in their efforts to reach a negotiated settlement.

I also left utterly convinced that U.S. aid to the Contras sets back those efforts.

Ineluctably and tragically, the Reagan administration is trying, I believe, to push Congress down a slippery slope that, in my judgment, will lead to more direct United States military intervention in Nicaragua.

Just a year ago, of course, Congress was reluctant to lift its ban on financial support for the anti-Sandinista rebels. Eventually, you did approve $27 million in so-called humanitarian aid, which the administration broadened to include virtually any nonlethal aid.

Now the administration seeks $100 million for the Contras, including $70 million in outright military aid. Approval of that request would be a sad mistake.

The administration has made four basic arguments on behalf of additional aid, none of which really makes the case.

First, it argues that, by keeping the Sandinistas occupied, the Contras help to distract them from adventurism in El Salvador.

President Jose Napoleon Duarte of El Salvador made this point on my recent trip to Central America, but I thought he did so without much conviction.

When I pressed Duarte as to whether he favored United States support for the Contras, he demurred, saying that this was an issue between the United States and Nicaragua.

The argument today that the Contras divert the Sandinistas from mischiefmaking in neighboring countries carries no more weight than the old argument that the Contras interdicted Sandinista arms destined for the Salvadoran rebels.

Everyone knows that the Contras have other reasons for being.

Second, the administration argues that the Contras keep pressure on the Sandinistas for internal political changes. This argument presumes that the Reagan administration would be satisfied with something less than the Sandinistas' ouster. As long as the Sandinistas believe otherwise—and the administration keeps giving them every reason to do so—they have no incentive to consider internal political accommodations.

In fact, the Contras' association with the Somocista National Guard and U.S. interventionism has helped to consolidate and stiffen the Sandinista regime.

Third, the administration argues that the Contras will overthrow the Sandinistas.

Outside of Washington, hardly anyone believes that the Contras, as currently constituted, can win. The Sandinistas have used the Contra threat to justify both a massive buildup of their armed forces and the resumption of emergency powers.

Despite unhappiness with the way the revolution has gone, most Nicaraguans have closed ranks against outside intervention. If most of the Contras had not repaired to Honduran sanctuary, they would have been defeated by now.

The Reagan administration apparently believes that the Contras' credibility as a fighting force depends not only on additional U.S. financial and military aid, but also on U.S. involvement in training the insurgents and in planning and directing the war. What the administration will not say is how much U.S. involvement would be enough and what the United States would do if the Contras still were unable to do the job.

Fourth, the administration argues that support for the Contras signifies U.S. resolve to stop Soviet expansionism in Central America.

Much of Central America is embittered by the Leninist turn of the Nicaraguan revolution, anxious about Sandinista ties to the Soviet Union and Cuba, and concerned over alleged Sandinista support for other revolutionary movements.

Yet, even the most virulent opponents of the Sandinistas are not much impressed by U.S. support for the Contras, as such. It does,

however, nurture their belief that the United States is so determined to route the Marxists that we ultimately will move directly against Nicaragua.

This belief has reinforced passivity within the internal Nicaraguan opposition, who are content to wait for Uncle Sam. In the meantime, U.S. aid to the Contras, far from preventing the spread of Soviet influence, has provided the pretext for escalating Soviet military assistance to the Sandinistas.

Sustaining the Contras is widely viewed in Central America as a no-win proposition for the region. It only prolongs a low-intensity war, contributes to a regional arms race, draws Central America deeper into the East-West struggle, and hampers regional trade, private investment, and tourism. Such a war could always flare into a regional conflagration, with deepening superpower involvement.

Over recent weeks, we have been continually treated to the spectacle of administration spokesmen assuring Central America of President Reagan's commitment to fight for more assistance to the Contras. In fact, as Oscar Arias, the new President-elect of Costa Rica, has recently reminded us, the countries of the region, and of Latin America in general, hardly seek such assurance.

Overwhelmingly, what would reassure them is evidence of progress toward a regional peace, starting with the cessation of aid to the Contras—if such a move were part of a larger set of accommodations on security issues between the Reagan administration and the Sandinistas.

The way might then be cleared for a full-scale, Contadora-sponsored regional settlement, and the United States could concentrate its political energies on more productive tasks, such as economic development and democratization in the countries neighboring Nicaragua. Progress in these areas, not stepped-up involvement with the Contras, is the key to an effective policy of containing Soviet ambitions. The success of Costa Rica's recovery and the search for social justice and self-determination in El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala, offer the best hope for keeping the Sandinista revolution within Nicaraguan bounds.

The alternative to support for the Contras is not invasion or surrender, but negotiation. The basis for a deal would be United States acceptance of the regime in Nicaragua in return for the Sandinistas' satisfying our most immediate security concerns. These include attenuation of their ties to the Soviets and Cubans, renunciation of support for insurgencies in neighboring countries, and reduction of the size and sophistication of the Sandinista army.

Ultimately, our choice is between a will-o'-the-wisp commitment to roll back the Sandinista revolution and a willingness to reach a realistic accommodation with it. Roll-back may seem resolute and cheap in Washington; but it is viewed as ineffective and costly in Central America.

More aid to the Contras is not the response that the region seeks to the Sandinista threat.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Bell.

The Chair notes the presence of the distinguished ranking member.

Senator Pell, do you have an opening thought or comments?

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Senator PELL. No; I have no opening statement.

Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Very well.

We will proceed now to questions.

I will ask unanimous consent that there be a 10-minute limit on this round of questions.

I would like to call now upon Senator Kassebaum to open the questions.

Senator KASSEBAUM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Silber, you were a very prominent member of the Kissinger Commission, and, as such, traveled rather extensively in Central America.

I would like to ask for your assessment of the positions of the other Central American countries toward our aid to the Contras.

Mr. SILBER. I think almost all experienced diplomats, observers, and travelers in Central America—and, for that matter, Latin America—are aware of the fact that public statements by officials are not very closely allied with what they say in private.

I have heard President Monge say in private that he was terribly concerned about the Nicaraguans, that he was deeply troubled about the lack of an army in Costa Rica, and that he was very strongly supportive of the idea of the United States being involved in helping to overthrow the Sandinistas.

I have heard a leader of the Panamanian Government say "I don't understand the United States. Why doesn't the United States, recognizing that there are about 8,000 Cubans in Nicaragua, that there are several hundred Russians in Nicaragua, why don't they recognize that this is really an occupation of Nicaragua by the Soviet Union and Cuba, and go in there and take them out?" Mr. Kissinger said: "Well, wouldn't you then denounce us publicly as 'ugly Americans,' interfering in the internal affairs of Nicaragua?"

The Panamanian said, "Of course, we would." He said, "You are the ugly Americans. You are the giant of the North. Go in there and act like it."

He fully reserved the right—and I found this in Mexico, in Honduras, in Guatemala, and in Costa Rica—he fully reserved the right publicly to denounce the United States when it intervened; but privately, in every one of those countries, they were in favor of United States intervention.

But today we are not talking about U.S. intervention. We are talking about the United States providing aid so that the people who really carried on the revolution against Somoza can succeed in it.

The fact that the myth I identified is not simply a will-o'-the-wisp is shown by a statement made by the previous witness, when he said that the Reagan administration is really trying to roll back the Sandinista revolution. When you talk that way, you are engaged in myth. There was no Sandinista revolution. The revolution was a democratic revolution against Somoza, and it would not have succeeded if the only people opposed to Somoza had been the Sandinistas. It was the fact that lawyers, doctors, ranchers, ordinary workers, the free labor movement, the church, the entire country was united against a kleptomaniac and determined to bring him down. That was the revolution against Somoza, and the people who

are fighting to restore the democratic objectives of that revolution—they have been robbed of the democratic fruits of that revolution—are people who enjoy a great deal of support and admiration in Honduras, Guatemala, Costa Rica, and Panama. I am sure, although I have not been there since Duarte has been President, that there was enormous support for them among many groups in El Salvador.

Senator KASSEBAUM. How do you assess the Contadora process?

Mr. SILBER. Well, I think the Contadora process is a laudable objective, and I think that we can see how effective it is by how long it has taken it to accomplish nothing.

This does not mean that we should abandon it. But I would also observe that, if it is to be effective, it takes the cooperation of the Nicaraguan Government, and that, at this stage, means the Sandinista government. The Sandinista government has amply demonstrated that it is not going to make any concessions essential to a Contadora agreement.

If you want a Contadora agreement, there is no better way to increase the chances of having one than to increase the aid of the Contras, because it is the pressure put on by the Contras that will lead the Sandinistas to making some reasonable concessions, such as the holding of genuinely free elections.

Senator KASSEBAUM. I would like to ask this of both of you.

Mr. Silber, you mentioned UNO. Why is it seemingly so difficult for UNO to draw support from the opposition within Nicaragua? These have been very divided efforts, wouldn't you say?

Mr. SILBER. I don't think it has been.

I think when you consider that UNO has now begun to unite several groups and even has some relationship with members of Eden Pastora's group, it is doing very well in that regard. When you stop to think that UNO now is the political arm of about 20,000 guerrillas, that is a huge success. When you consider that they have done this with virtually no support from the United States, with a pittance of aid that has been tied up by so many regulations that it scarcely can be used, I think what we have to say is not that they have not been effective, but that they have been hugely effective.

The fact is that the intellectual and business leadership in Nicaragua and the press, the church, the Miskito Indians, the ranchers, and the businessmen—all of these are united behind UNO. Robelo, Calero, Cruz—these are the leading families in that country—not in the sense that you have leading families in El Salvador that own a large amount, but in the sense that they represent leading groups.

Also, you have the support of the AFL-CIO in Nicaragua, the vestigial remains of those unions. I have met with those leaders, and those leaders are fundamentally supportive of the Contra activity.

Senator KASSEBAUM. Mr. Bell, do you have an answer to that?

Mr. BELL. Yes; thank you.

I would like to comment briefly on your three questions, on the third first.

It is clear to me that there is widespread dissatisfaction with the Sandinista regime. But it is equally clear that there is not broad-based political support for the Contras.

I think this is the reason that the Contras have been militarily and politically ineffective.

Second, with regard to the Contadora process, I believe that continued support for the Contras is prejudicial to that process. I think that it is quite clear that the members of the Contadora group and the South American support group for Contadora believe so as well.

The negotiating process within Contadora must be based on a possibility of reaching some kind of mutual accommodation, and as long as the United States objective in Nicaragua is the overthrow of that Government, it is, I think, completely unrealistic to believe that that Government will engage in good-faith negotiations with the United States or with the other members of Contadora.

Finally, with regard to Mr. Silber's report of a difference between the public and private statements of Central Americans, I must say that my private conversations have been somewhat different from his. But I think that we really have to pay attention to what these political leaders in increasingly open and more democratic settings are saying publicly. After all, if we are supporting democracy—and, most of all, in Costa Rica, where there is a tradition of it—we must take seriously what President-elect Arias says. And it is clear that he opposes U.S. support for the Contras, and believes that the most effective way to limit the Sandinistas is through support for economic assistance in the neighboring countries, and for support of more open politics.

Senator KASSEBAUM. If I may just ask you one more question, Mr. Bell. If there could be some way that there was a more effective coalition of all the opposition, do you think then our assistance and aid and support would be effective? Or do you object to any U.S. aid?

Mr. BELL. I believe that the support that the United States Government gave in the final hours to the attempt by President Aquino in the Philippines to assert the authority to which she had been elected was exactly right. In that case, we were responding to a very broad based, internally generated majority movement in the country.

If there were a similar situation within Nicaragua, I would hope that we would be supportive in a similar way.

Senator KASSEBAUM. Well, there is one significant difference, of course. In the Philippines, the opposition did have the opportunity to be heard. There were several opposition and, more than that, newspapers, and no one knows this better, of course, than the chairman, who was there and very carefully observing all of this.

Mr. BELL. That is correct.

Also I think it is important to observe that in the Philippines, Mrs. Aquino did run, even though she realized she was running in a rigged election. I think that Arturo Cruz made a bad mistake when he decided not to run in a rigged election in Nicaragua. The duty of a democrat is to run.

Senator KASSEBAUM. Thank you.

My time is up, Mr. Silber.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Kassebaum.

Senator Pell.

Senator PELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First, I would like to thank Mr. Bell for coming on very short notice. Our previous witness had canceled, and you were asked to come down on Sunday afternoon, and here you are with a prepared testimony. Thank you.

Second, I was struck with Mr. Silber's point, the same one Mr. Shultz had made earlier, that the public and private statements of these leaders differ.

Well, that may be. I think sometimes that applies to Members of Congress and other officials.

But I think you have to go by what they say publicly, on the record. The fact that they may have different thoughts privately, if true, is still, I think, irrelevant and immaterial.

I think that point should be recognized.

Third, the question of whether labor supports the government there or supports our terrorists—the Contras—the fact of the matter is that, according to the New York Times today, the labor movement is divided about evenly on that.

I would ask unanimous consent to insert into the record at this point an article to this effect. I have no further questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection, it is so ordered.

[See appendix.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Pell.

Senator Biden, do you have questions of the witnesses?

Senator BIDEN. I have one question, and I apologize for not being here earlier.

Mr. Bell, let me ask you this. Based on your statement on page 5, you say, and I quote:

> The basis for a deal would be U.S. acceptance of the regime in Nicaragua in return for the Sandinistas' satisfying our most immediate security concerns. These include attenuation of their ties to the Soviets and Cubans, renunciation of support for insurgencies in neighboring countries, and reduction of the size and sophistication of their army.

Are the Sandinistas, in your view, in effect, given their basic ideology and arms, capable of such a deal?

Mr. BELL. I believe that they are, because I believe that they have fundamental interests that dictate their interest in reaching accommodation with us on those objectives.

I think there is fairly good evidence that, back in 1984, they were ready to reach such an agreement. They have backed off from it over the past year. I think they have decided, rightly or wrongly, that a deal cannot be struck with the current administration in Washington.

But I think that there is a good chance—there are risks involved, but I think there is a good chance that agreement could be reached with the Sandinistas along those lines, an agreement to which they could be held accountable.

Senator BIDEN. Assuming we made a good-faith effort to do that, and in your judgment assuming a good-faith effort by this administration, and it failed, would you then support support for the Contras?

Mr. BELL. I would not.

If we made a good-faith effort along those lines, then I would support dealing with the Sandinista government through multilateral means.

Senator BIDEN. I don't understand that. You sound like you are from the State Department.

Assume that a good-faith effort were made and you, from an intellectual perspective concluded that we (a) made a good-faith effort, and (b) the Sandinistas, faced with our good-faith effort, rejected one or all of the conditions of negotiation, that is, an attenuation of Soviet and Cuban presence, a reduction in the sophistication, no longer meddling in the affairs of their neighbors—assuming (a) we made the good-faith effort, and (b) they did not respond, they did not attenuate their relationship, they did not stop meddling, they did not reduce their sophistication, but increased it, what conclusion would you reach then? What should U.S. policy be then?

Mr. BELL. I think that U.S. policy, under those circumstances, should be to work through the machinery of the Organization of American States with our friends and allies in Central America and in Latin America to put a stop, particularly to subversion in the surrounding countries.

Senator BIDEN. Do you have any evidence or reason to believe that in that circumstance there could be any consensus reached among the countries you mentioned to take efforts to stop, to either attenuate the relationship, stop the actions in neighboring states and/or reduce their sophistication?

Mr. BELL. Yes.

I think that if the United States made a good-faith effort along those lines, it would be acting fully within the spirit of the Contadora framework, the policy that our Latin American friends, the democratic countries within that region are urging on us, and, indeed, the policy that our Western European allies are urging on us. We would then have their support, and we would be acting in concert with them, rather than in the isolated way in which we are conducting ourselves today.

Senator BIDEN. Do you acknowledge at some point that it is theoretically possible that negotiations, by themselves, might not be able to produce the result which implicitly you suggest is important for U.S. interests—that is, the three conditions being met?

Mr. BELL. Negotiations, by themselves, are never a certainty. There are risks involved.

I would argue that the three limited security objectives that I have set forth, and which were set forth within the Contadora framework as well, are, in fact, being set back by our current policy in support of the Contras.

Senator BIDEN. I do not disagree with you. I am just trying to figure out what your next step would be.

What concerns me is this. I find myself in deep sympathy with those who suggest that this administration has gradually presented us with nothing but Hobson's choices because of the bad policy decisions which they have moved along. To that extent I agree with you fully.

I have real doubt about some of the people who are arguing about no aid, which is my position at this point, who appear to suggest that if negotiations fail, then I don't know what we do next. I just want to make sure that you have thought through—as I am

about to ask Mr. Silber in the little time I have left—what you do if, in fact, your initial proposal fails.

Mr. BELL. Let me just say this as well. One of my objections to aid to the Contras, and the Contras as a major means of U.S. policy within the region, is that I think it really is not a policy at all. It is a weak policy. It is morally weak. It is legally weak. It is politically weak and it is militarily weak.

I could respect advocacy of a policy of direct invasion. I would disagree with it profoundly, but I could at least respect it as consonant with the administration's apparent goals in Nicaragua. It seems to me that aid to the Contras is a Washington way out of a political situation within this town.

Senator BIDEN. Well, that gives me an opportunity in the 2 minutes I have left—and I appreciate your cooperating with me on my time, Doctor, and I am not going to ask you box canyon kinds of questions here—but let me suggest that that may be a reasonable lead into this next question.

I assume the reason why you so strongly support the administration's proposal is not that the Contras are the best way, but there is no prospect for rallying American public opinion to do anything else. It is the best of the alternatives available to deal with the situation in Nicaragua.

Is that right or wrong?

Mr. SILBER. I think that that is partly right and partly wrong. That sounds like a Washington answer, but I think I can bring it to the proper conclusion.

The extraordinary developments among the Contras, the development of UNO and the rapid recruitment of thousands and thousands of young people, particularly in the countryside, among the Campesinos, where the Sandinistas are supposed to have such support, indicates—and we know this from many reports—that what limits the Contras capacity to expand is really money to arm the people who are already there as volunteers.

Now, you are not going to get any broad-based political support for the Contras in Nicaragua after the decree of October 15. This would be like asking, "Where was the united organized opposition to Adolph Hitler after February 23, 1933?" Once a totalitarian regime is in place and you have the block parties and you have the enforcement systems, you are not going to have any popular, broad-based political support within that country itself. That explains much of the failure of the Contras to be able to speak for all the people openly in Nicaragua. But the support is growing all the time.

I think that with military aid—perhaps $100 million is not enough. I personally would have favored $200 million. But I think with that kind of support, where you have weapons to take out the helicopter gunships supplied by the Soviet Union, where you can defend these guerrillas from the attack by those terrible gunships, I think then they have an excellent chance of winning, and the odds are quite tolerable.

Senator BIDEN. Do you believe that the Sandinistas, given their basic ideology and their aims, are capable of arriving at a position the administration states is the rationale for the Contra aid, which is that they believe this Contra aid will, in fact, be the vehicle by

which the Sandinistas will be brought to the table to negotiate the three conditions set out by Mr. Bell plus one more, and that is the liberalization, if you will, of their internal repression.

Mr. SILBER. I think the aid to the Contras will bring the Sandinistas to the bargaining table only as a last resort in the way in which the Communists finally went to the bargaining table in Hanoi; and then, once the pressure is relieved as a result of the conference, the Sandinistas will go right back to their old ways.

Senator BIDEN. The only answer is to get rid of the Sandinistas?

Mr. SILBER. I think that the Sandinistas are actually occupied by the Cubans right now, and I think if they decided that they were going to cut their ties or seriously attenuate their ties with the Soviet Union, that there would be a very sudden "Night of the Long Knives" and a change of leadership among the Sandinistas. I think that they will disappear when the Contras defeat them.

Senator BIDEN. Thank you for your straight answers. I appreciate that.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Biden.

Senator Kerry, do you have questions of these witnesses?

Senator KERRY. I have a couple. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I apologize to my friend and coinhabitant of our great State for not being here earlier when he was speaking.

Mr. SILBER. Constituent.

Senator KERRY. With respect to the current efforts of the Contras, Mr. Silber, in answer to Senator Biden's last question, you said that you expect that when the Contras defeat them, X, Y, and Z will take place.

I don't think that this committee has heard any testimony at any point in time that has ever asserted that the Contras can, in fact, win.

Do you somehow have a different sense of that, or are you speaking totally theoretically?

Mr. SILBER. No, I am not speaking theoretically. I'm speaking of the fact that when a decree of October 15 comes forward that suspends the right to seek, receive, and spread information and ideas, that is, that introduces total censorship of the press and television; when it suspends the right to travel freely within the country, when it suspends the right to travel abroad, the right to public assembly, the right to free association, the right to private postal communication—which means censorship of all the mail—when it suspends the right to strike, the right of habeas corpus for prisoners, when it suspends laws prohibiting arbitrary arrest and detention, and suspends laws that call for prisoners to be speedily informed of charges against them, suspends the laws which guarantee a trial by jury, suspends guarantees of adequate time to prepare a defense, when it suspends laws protecting the privacy of the home, when a decree like that is passed, which is worse than the decree passed by Adolph Hitler in February 1933, I think the people will be trying every way they can to rid themselves of that tyranny. And I think that if the Democratic Party—and I speak as a Democrat—allies itself with the perpetuation of that totalitarian government, we will be on a slippery slope to the point that eventually we will be involved in a war there.

I think, for that reason, it is a lot smarter for us to be paying for the firemen than for us to go in there and put out the fire ourselves.

Senator KERRY. But, isn't there a difference? Nobody here on this committee on either side of the aisle has anything good to say about the decree you just read. That is not even at issue here.

In fact, Secretary of State Shultz came up here the other day, and I think everybody on the committee happily and easily agreed that there is no one here who is thinking about voting in any way that somehow is in favor of what is there.

The only issue before this committee is the question of how we achieve a fairly common assessment of goals. I think that is what we are trying to get at.

My question to you still comes back to this. And I do not disagree with you. That is one of the most heinous, absurd, horrendous, oppressive decrees I have ever heard of, and the Sandinistas should be duly held up to public scrutiny for it. But the issue is can the Contras, if we give them the aid that is asked for this year, in fact, make that difference?

Now, you have talked about rights, and I agree with certain rights that we all have in the world to do things. Do the Sandinistas not have a right, in response to whatever we do with the Contras, to get more Soviet helicopters?

Mr. SILBER. They don't have the right to get that unless the United States of America decides to forget all about the Kennedy doctrine.

In October 1962, with the support of both branches of the Congress, with the support of Republicans and Democrats, Kennedy said that this country agreed not to invade Cuba on the clear understanding that Cuba would end its attempts to spread the Communist revolution in the Western Hemisphere and that there would be no offensive weapons in Cuba.

Through a series of administrations, I regret to say both Democratic and Republican, that Kennedy doctrine has been abandoned.

Senator KERRY. Well, I might again question you here.

I happen to believe in that doctrine.

Mr. SILBER. Then we don't have to answer the question you asked.

Senator KERRY. Well, the issue is is a helicopter considered to be the kind of weapon that fell under the doctrine?

Mr. SILBER. Absolutely.

One thing that was clear—it was not——

Senator KERRY. Well, then, why are we not today invading Cuba or taking greater steps?

Mr. SILBER. The reason we are not invading Cuba today is because we failed to do it at a time when it could have been done easily. It is the estimate of military experts today that it would take, perhaps, 34 divisions to accomplish that result, and that is not a realistic proposition. One has to take a very different tack there.

On the other hand, we should not be blinded to the fact that there is a very small problem in Nicaragua, and that it could be handled by the Contras if we help them.

Now, I fail to see how the Congress can have it both ways. If Democrats in Congress want to say they are opposed to totalitarian government in Nicaragua, I don't see how they prove that by denying aid to the Contras, who are the only effective forces supporting democracy in Nicaragua.

Senator KERRY. Well, let me give you an example.

We very effectively opposed totalitarian dictatorship in the Philippines, and we did not arm the opposition.

Mr. SILBER. That was not even close to totalitarian.

This leads me to point out a great mistake that was made earlier in the testimony.

Senator KERRY. It wasn't close to totalitarian?

Mr. SILBER. No, it was not close to totalitarian.

You had an election there that has been described as rigged, but that election, as a matter of fact, was not rigged. The counting was rigged. That election—and I get this report from many people who were close observers of it—allowed Aquino to go everywhere. She was not subjected to the kind of terrorism and abuse that the Turbas imposed on Cruz. She had access to all parts of the Philippines and carried on a vigorous, American-style political campaign.

Now, when they came to counting the votes, of course, that was like Farr County, TX, and Marcos packed into the ballot box as many votes as he needed to win.

But the election itself, which I think satisfied everybody that Acquino had the majority support in the Philippines, was, to that extent, an honest election. It bore no resemblance to that charade that was put on by the Sandinistas.

So, if we are going to recognize the difference, we had better recognize that Marcos made the very fatal mistake of allowing enough democracy to rally the forces of democracy against him. Similarly, we have to recognize that it was General Mejia, who none of us think of as being a particularly democratic character, who sat back and restrained the army while they had a model free election in Guatemala.

We see no signs of that kind of toleration of the slightest degree of democracy by the Sandinistas.

Senator KERRY. I don't have enough time, unfortunately, in this dialogue to draw the distinctions with respect to the Philippines. I guess I would have grave differences.

I was talking not so much about the election as about what existed prior to that fact, where you had a presidential detainment action, no habeas corpus, total control of the army, no access to radio and TV and a host of other things.

But let me come back to Nicaragua and Central America.

It seems to me that we ought to be taking note of the fact that in our efforts to try to isolate the Sandinistas and in our efforts to try to bring whatever other pressures might be brought to bear, we seem to be leaving behind those countries that ought to be most concerned.

I mean, here we are, the "Colossus of the North," drawing spectres of this terrible fear, and yet, Costa Rica has just negotiated its own agreement with Nicaragua in the last few days.

Mr. SILBER. Yes.

Senator KERRY. What does that say to us? Does it say anything?

Mr. SILBER. What that says is that history is repeating itself. Just as many countries, including the Soviet Union, signed appeasement treaties with Adolph Hitler, so Costa Rica now is so frightened by its Nicaraguan neighbor that it has signed an appeasement treaty to get along. I think that was well pointed out by Eduardo Ulibarri, the distinguished editor of Costa Rica's largest newspaper, "La Nacion." He said:

> The American tolerance of a totalitarian state in Central America means that no Central American government could dare contradict that state's right to exist or support others that do. Faced with an enemy as formidable as Soviet-backed Nicaragua, Honduras has no choice but to follow a pragmatic course of appeasement with a totalitarian government it profoundly mistrusts. In the short-term, Washington's policies will increase tension in countries bordering Nicaragua and reduce the possibilities of democracy in Nicaragua. In the long-run, however, the repercussions could be worse. Reliability on the United States, as a dependable ally, will vanish among many American democratic sectors, while the prospects for the Finlandization of Costa Rica and the militarization of Honduras will increase.

And what we have seen is the beginnings of the Finlandization of Costa Rica, and that is not because they trust the Nicaraguans. It is not because they are opposed to our supporting the Contras. It is because they are afraid, desperately afraid.

Senator KERRY. But what I am trying to get at is if those fears exist, and if they were realized in some form, don't we today, through the Treaty of Rio and through the Organization of American States, have ample recourse to be able ultimately to bring even force to bear in order to protect those interests under the treaty?

Why must we circumvent the rule of law and international law?

Mr. SILBER. Well, it is your opinion, perhaps, that we are circumventing that law.

Senator KERRY. Well, the Treaty of Rio—you are familiar with it?

Mr. SILBER. Yes.

Senator KERRY. The Treaty of Rio is a doctrine of mutual defense, is it not?

Mr. SILBER. Yes.

Senator KERRY. If Costa Rica were indeed threatened and invaded by Nicaragua, we have right, in fact, we have an obligation, to go to their defense, do we not?

Mr. SILBER. That's right. And that does not mean——

Senator KERRY. Why isn't that adequate?

Mr. SILBER. That is not adequate because we are going to see the buildup in Nicaragua to the point that when that action happens——

Senator KERRY. Well, let me speak about the buildup. I want to ask you about this. The Contradora agreement draft of September 1984, which the Nicaraguans said they would sign the next day—and where we have secret documents showing that the National Security Council delighted in thwarting the signing thereof by putting enormous pressure on four of the countries of the Contadora process—if they signed it, they say it would have frozen in place their current level of armaments, reached a protocol among all member parties as to precisely what level is allowed with respect to armaments and what types of armaments, and we could, in fact, have had a demilitarization of that area rather than the increased militarization.

Now, why isn't that adequate? Why not accept that signing and that process, and then, if it is violated, assert through the other international fora our rights and obligations?

Mr. SILBER. There is a very good reason, in my opinion. I would have hoped that we would have learned something from the inadequacies of the negotiations with Hitler by Chamberlain, through all of the lying promises and pledges that have been made by the Soviet Union, through the violation of the understanding with Kennedy that has gone on in Cuba. I am submitting that if the Democrats in the Congress do not join the Republicans in support of this effort to carry out what really amounts to President Kennedy's policy for Central America, our party alone—and I speak as a Democrat—alone will have to answer to the American people for the consequences. I think those consequences will be a war.

I think that, while we can pay for the firemen and don't have to fight the fire, that is the time for us to act.

Senator KERRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Kerry.

Senator Trible.

Senator TRIBLE. Mr. Chairman, I would be happy to yield my time to Senator Kerry if he would like to pursue his questions with Mr. Silber.

Senator KERRY. I appreciate that enormously.

In response, Mr. Silber, I must say to you that I would like to make this statement, because I think it is terribly important with respect to this debate.

I am somewhat disturbed by the current effort of the administration and others to somehow draw this thing in lines that say that if the Democratic Party does not respond or Democrats somehow do not vote for this specific aid package, we are somehow negligent in a Chamberlainian fashion with respect to somehow repeating a Munich and being appeasers.

I do not think that this is the only alternative in front of us.

We can both agree that the Sandinistas are increasingly reprehensible. We can both agree that neither of us will ever accept a Soviet base or beachhead, that there should be no offensive weapons that would threaten the United States in this hemisphere, that we will not tolerate the export of revolution across country lines, that we seek a stability in that region and have differing ways of trying to get at it.

The mere fact that I or some of my colleagues may not want to vote for $100 million of aid for the Contras does not mean that we support the total opposite of that policy, which is the Sandinistas and the direction in which they are moving.

Now, somehow this dialog must not fall into that kind of simplistic pitfall, where we are getting into a "neo-McCarthyesque" area that says that——

Mr. SILBER. Oh, please. I think it is "McCarthyite" to accuse a witness, like myself, of getting into McCarthyism.

Senator KERRY. I'm not. I'm not. I said "the administration." I did not say yourself, Mr. Silber.

Mr. SILBER. Well, I think it is a McCarthy-like tactic to try to blame the administration for being McCarthy-like in that way, because I see no resemblance.

Senator KERRY. Mr. Silber, all I know is that for 2 weeks I have been hearing about secret, classified reports that are going to be unclassified, that list the names of Americans whom the Sandinistas are going to use in order to prevent aid from going down to Nicaragua. When I hear about classified reports that are going to be purged and sanitized in an effort to try to discredit Americans who oppose policy, I worry.

That, to me, is a reversion to an old policy which this country remembers too well.

All I am doing is saying I don't want the dialog to fall into that. I don't think it has between you and us here, and I am not saying you are.

But it certainly is beginning to on a national scene.

Now, there are alternatives here and I think we have to explore them, and I thank my colleague, the Senator from Virginia, for offering me that opportunity.

You say to me in response to my question that we don't want to repeat the experience of Germany. And what I am saying to you is we are not dealing with Germany. We are dealing with a country that is smaller than the State of North Carolina, that has half the population of Massachusetts, that has less than 20, I think, helicopters, less than 20 fixed-wing aircraft, maybe 100 tanks, and that is it.

They have said they are willing to sign an agreement, which we know we can verify, that locks into place that current arsenal. That is the arsenal pointed at the United States. They have said they are willing to lock it into place.

They have also said they are willing to sign an agreement which prohibits any Soviet or Cuban military advisers.

Now, my only question is why, before we go to the effort of arming more people, of building yet more bases in Honduras, of militarizing a zone which, at least to us, in private, almost every major leader in the region has said please don't do this, please don't do this, why are we persisting in going down a path that does not put them to the test?

Americans have good judgment. They are willing to make the judgment about whether or not this is violated, and, if it is, we have ample recourse to proceed.

Why not go down that route?

Mr. SILBER. We have put them to the test. We have put them to the test so many times, it is not funny.

They pledged on June 23, 1979, to the Organization of American States that they would promptly hold free elections. There has not been a free election in Nicaragua to this very day. And no one could describe that charade in which the only serious opposition was harassed continuously as anything like an election.

I think that they have had many tests, and there is no excuse for the level of naivete and nonhistorical judgment that is involved in this line of questioning.

I think we have to remember what Kennedy said in 1962, with the full backing of both parties and both Houses of Congress:

> The United States is determined to prevent by whatever means may be necessary, including the use of arms, the Marxist-Leninist regime in Cuba from extending, by force or threat of force, its aggressive or subversive activities to any part of this

hemisphere, and to prevent in Cuba the creation or use of an externally supported military capability endangering the security of the United States.

It is quite clear that the Congress and the administrations in succeeding years have failed to live up to that, and we are facing the consequences of having failed to do so now, in Nicaragua. If we do not face up to this issue right now, we are going to find ourselves in a very serious conflagration that is going to involve American lives and American soldiers.

The time to meet this threat is now. We have had plenty of tests, and when you describe that treaty and suggest that we could have had adequate means of verification, your reading of that document is entirely different from mine. I saw nothing in that document that would indicate how we would ever find out that the Cubans and Soviet advisers had been removed.

There are estimates now that there are over 200 Soviet advisers in the Department of the Interior alone, and there are several thousand Cubans.

We heard the announcement by Daniel Ortega just before Christmas, a couple of years ago, that he was withdrawing 1,500 of his advisers. As a matter of fact, he was sending home 1,500 schoolteachers, who have their vacation at that time of year, and they came right back.

Senator KERRY. You must have been able to verify it for you to make that statement.

Mr. SILBER. You can verify when that many catch a plane, but you cannot verify whether they are military advisers or not. Their claim that they were military——

Senator KERRY. Well, then, how can you tell me that they were teachers and not military advisers?

Mr. SILBER. You can recognize this, that the people who were there departed exactly when the kids were let out of school, and they came back when the kids came back to school. That is pretty good evidence. But, with regard to military advisers, unless you get rid of every last Cuban, it is pretty hard to tell. It is a cute remark, but, as a matter of fact, the situation in Nicaragua is not that easy to determine.

Senator KERRY. Believe me, I am not trying to be cute here.

But let me tell you, I listened to the CIA briefings, and I listened to the Defense Department briefings. All of us are privy to that. It seems to me, given what we are able to discern about what happens in the Soviet Union, and given what we discern in China and a host of other countries in the world, we have a pretty good ability to know exactly what is happening.

In fact, the Secretary of State came here and has told us what is happening in Central America. Their request for $100 million is based on their very assessment of what is happening down there.

We know exactly how many helicopters they have. We can tell when they offload them on ships. We know exactly whether they are increasing their arms or not. We know when they have training going on, or don't have it going on, or maneuvers, or when they do not have maneuvers. That is the most easily verifiable thing in the world. And if it is not, we ought to get a new intelligence establishment.

Mr. SILBER. I reached the conclusion, after serving on the Kissinger Commission—I said to the Director of the CIA that was briefing us, that I would pose a dilemma: either he didn't have any secrets or we didn't have a security clearance.

I came to a very different conclusion with regard to how much in detail we know. I asked very serious questions: How do you know that there are no ballistic missiles, nuclear weapons, in Cuba, and I got a runaround on that. We know that there are Soviet nuclear submarines being tended in Cienfuegos, we know that there are buildings there that have gantry cranes that could load missiles. There is no satellite in the universe that can penetrate the roofs of those buildings.

Senator KERRY. Let me ask you one other question.

Don't you think we would be in a stronger position in this country if we joined with the eight Contadora ministers and made the effort to try to establish consensus in this policy by setting up a series of tiered protocols by which we will make certain judgments, in a bipartisan fashion, and if those judgments are violated, don't we then still have the option to really take the kind of action necessary to prevent the Sandinistas from spreading?

Wouldn't it be stronger to have a country unified behind a policy than divided, as it was, in Vietnam, because we pursued a sort of one-track goal without creating the consensus necessary for a policy?

Mr. SILBER. I think that we need a consensus. I think that that is what many of us are trying to do, to build a consenus.

Senator KERRY. Wouldn't the consensus best come from first putting to test the negotiating Contadora process?

Mr. SILBER. If you want to do that. We have been testing the Contadora process for the last 4 years. If we want to test the Contadora process while the buildup of the Nicaraguan forces continues unabated for the next 3 or 4 years, fine. Then be prepared, though, for the political consequences of the developments that follow.

I find it hard to understand why, if we, as Republicans and Democrats, are united behind the support of democracy, for Nicaragua as for elsewhere, that we find it possible to have voted $117 million of aid to the Sandinistas that have destroyed the democratic hopes of the revolution, and we are unwilling to vote $100 million for the Contras.

I would think that we ought to vote at least $117 million for the Contras, just to even up the score.

Senator TRIBLE. Mr. Chairman, let me reclaim the time that I do not have remaining, and simply say that I think this point-counterpoint has been highly instructive.

Mr. Silber, you have made a very compelling case for a bipartisan response to the problems posed by Nicaragua. I was certain that you would, and so I thank you for being here today, and I thank my colleague for his questions, because I think it has built a record on which, hopefully, we can build a basis for action.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Kerry and Senator Trible.

Let me ask these few questions.

Mr. Bell, in your testimony, I think you have given a very good case for the opposition on this question, and I take a position of favoring the President's request, so I suppose, in all honesty, I should

say that at the outset while respecting the carefulness with which you have prepared your testimony.

But even with those biases sort of clear and in front of us, it seems to me that you have set forth on the final page of your testimony some foreign policy objectives of our country with regard to Nicaragua; namely, that that country should cut ties with the Soviets and the Cubans, should renounce support for insurgencies in neighboring countries, and should reduce the size and sophistication of the army.

I would gather that your suggestion is that this might occur through negotiations under the Contradora group, or it might occur in direct negotiations with the United States, or maybe even, you have mentioned such forums as the OAS.

What assurance do we have without the Contras being present and without there being adequate support for them, and the pressures that are implied by their activities, that the Sandinista regime would want to negotiate on any or all of these objectives, or would have any reason to fulfill any such pledges should some kind of an agreement be reached?

Mr. BELL. Of course, no one can give absolute assurances, and it would be foolhardy to say that we could.

What I do think is that if the United States followed a policy first of bilateral negotiations with the Sandinistas but within the spirit and the framework of the Contadora draft agreement, and then we worked in support of the Contadora group, we would have broad and strong international support for that approach.

That being the case, if the Sandinistas violated the agreement, we would find ourselves quickly able to mobilize international opinion and to use the machinery of the Organization of American States as it was designed to be used.

The CHAIRMAN. Fair enough. We may be able to mobilize international opinion and the moral support of the OAS. But at that stage, what leverage, what power of what power of suasion, would we be able to exert?

In other words, I have no doubt that at this moment most of the world finds the actions of the Sandinista regime to be repugnant. If we were to have a show of hands on that issue, a great deal of support would be exhibited.

Much of the administration's thinking is predicated on the notion that the Contras constitute the only force capable of bringing the Sandinistas to the negotiating table.

Mr. BELL. I don't think that is so.

I think we have a double irony here.

In the first place, it is true that most of the world may view the Sandinista regime as being repugnant. But most of the world also believes that U.S. support for the Contras is repugnant.

The second irony is that precisely those three limited security objectives that you cited in my testimony are, in fact, being set back, not forward, by our support for the Contras.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, there are major differences of opinion on that. It would appear that with respect to at least the first of your three limited security objectives, the Sandinistas are moving toward even closer ties with the Soviets, largely because they are

dependent on them for money. The Nicaraguan economy is nearly bankrupt, and the regime is in hock to Moscow.

As has been pointed out by Mr. Silber, even if the Sandinistas wanted to cut their ties with the Cubans and the Russians, there is some question as to whether they are free agents in that respect. I am not certain that they are.

Mr. BELL. I agree. It is not an "either/or" case. There is no question that there is a dynamic at work within that Marxist revolutionary regime that makes them reach out for that aid, accept it, and ally themselves with the Soviets and the Cubans.

At the same time, our support for the Contras helps them to justify that tendency and helps them to escalate that Soviet and Cuban involvement within the country before the eyes of the world. They are taking advantage of the pretext that we have given them.

The CHAIRMAN. It is a very difficult problem. You may be right that pressures on the regime impel it to call for greater Soviet and Cuban involvement. On the other hand, absent such pressure, there are still sufficient reasons for the Sandinistas to consolidate such outside involvement and even accelerate it.

Mr. BELL. I think the point here is this.

I do not mean to say that the Nicaraguans are not suffering because of the Contras. They are. I think both the government and the anti-Sandinista rebels estimate there were something like 6,000 Nicaraguans killed last year. In U.S. proportions, that would be nearly 500,000 people in our society.

I think we have to ask ourselves, as the greatest democracy in the world, what is that suffering really contributing to the cause of peace and to the security of the region and to the security of the United States. I think an honest answer to that question would come up short.

The CHAIRMAN. The suffering of the Nicaraguan people must, of course, be of major concern to us. But we must also take account of the substantial problem posed to the United States by Soviet use of Nicaragua as a base. Nicaraguan ties with the Soviets and Cubans are undeniable and, in my judgment will grow without the existence of some kind of counterforce.

No one wishes ill upon the Nicaraguan people. But, at the same time, the existence of such facilities in our hemisphere poses a security risk for our country.

Mr. BELL. Mr. Chairman, I agree with your concern.

One of the problems here is that, to the degree that the threat of Nicaragua is viewed in this country as a Soviet threat, we must be prepared to deal directly with the Soviets about that threat. Support for the Contras is a very weak instrument to confront the Soviet Union in Central America.

The CHAIRMAN. This leads to my second line of questioning.

You have argued that support for the Contras through the vehicle of aid that the President has requested is morally, legally, and political deficient. You noted your opposition to any direct military invasion by the United States but indicated, nonetheless, that you could at least respect that kind of policy.

It seems to me that, in the last analysis, you are coming close to arguing that, to the extent our policy objectives are legitimate, the

Contras are a flawed means of accomplishing such objectives and we ought to simply consider dedicated our own forces to rectifying the situation in Nicaragua.

This is one of the potential dilemmas each of us has to face in considering this issue.

The President is not calling for American troops to go to Nicaragua. To the contrary, he is arguing that we are less likely to have the face the option of employing U.S. forces if we support individuals who are trying to regain their own freedom.

I agree with that.

If we simply abandon support for the Contras, the security problems emanting from Nicaragua will likely remain unchanged, and thus the President or the Congress at some point could very well say that such threats to our interests are sufficient grave that we ought to send in American forces to deal with such threats.

This, I think, would be very regrettable, and this is one reasons why many want to suport the Contras—because they represent one means of exerting pressure on the Sandinistas to move toward genuine negotiations, of raising the costs to the Sandinistas of accelerating outside involvement, and hopefully of promoting genuinely free elections in Nicaragua.

Mr. BELL. Well, I believe that our limited security objectives can be achieved through negotiation without our supporting the Contras. I also think that the way to contain the Sandinistas over the coming years is through support of economic development and political openings in the surrounding countries.

One of the unfortunate effects of this whole policy of aid to the Contras is that it shifts attention away from what could be done positively within the region. The kind of reaction that has occurred in the neighboring countries of Central America to the Sandinista revolution, that is, the reaction whereby people have become aware of the need for social reform, economic development, and political openings is very encouraging.

This certainly needs to be supported.

The CHAIRMAN. I would argue, Mr. Bell, that it is not American support of the Contras that has created the major problem. It is the Sandinista regime itself. It threatens economic viability and development of neighboring Central American states, and that is one of the most discouraging aspects of the situation to people who really want to assist economic and social development of the region. The need for reforms is so obvious, and a major question all of us is how to bring about such development with a minimal amount of sacrifice in lives, of burden on the American treasury, and without sacrificing the legitimate aspirations of the people in Nicaragua fighting for their freedom.

I appreciate that we have an honest difference of opinion, and I am grateful for your testimony.

Mr. BELL. Exactly.

I would only hope that we here will listen to our democratic friends throughout the rest of the world, in Europe, in Central America, and in South America.

The CHAIRMAN. Let me at this point recognize Senator Dodd.

Before I do so, Senator Dodd, you are fully entitled to 10 minutes of questioning as we all have exhausted our 10 minutes, and sometimes more.

We have another panel that is expert on this question that will be coming on.

So, if you will ask your questions and everyone will remain patient, then we will proceed with the next panel. We will conclude our hearing by the end of the morning.

Senator Dodd.

Senator DODD. I think the next panel will probably pick up a lot of the same points, so I do not need to exhaust the 10 minutes, Mr. Chairman. I thank you for giving me the time and apologize to our witnesses as well as the committee members. I have had two other hearings going on simultaneously, in the Labor Committee and the Banking Committee this morning.

I suspect maybe Senator Kerry picked up on some of this, Mr. Silber.

My great problem, with your perspective on this thing is a problem I have with an awful lot of people in dealing with this whole issue and that is for many, the world in Latin America began around 1979, and that everyone's framework seems to begin at that point, and there is little appreciation of the history of this hemisphere, the relationships that have existed between this country and our neighboring nations in this part of the world, the interrelationships by and between those countries in Central and South America, and any kind of sense of history about it at all.

I presume you appreciate, I hope you appreciate how unprecedented an action we are witnessing in Central and South America after almost 500 years of history. I know of no other time in 500 years of history that we have seen two occurrences. One is the sense of cooperation between these countries. To have eight foreign ministers on their own, at their own initiative, join together to come and to petition a Secretary of State as far as I know is unprecedented historically. To have as many democracies existing simultaneously in this hemisphere is an unprecedented event. And to have all of these democracies, allies, who have fought, by the way, Marxism—these are not nations that have not grappled or had to militarily deal with Marxism. They are not naive about the problem at all.

President Betancourt of Colombia, my God, what he has had to go through. President Garcia in Peru, what they are going through. In Argentina, my lord, what they have been through in that country. And in Venezuela, what they have been going through, and in Guatemala, what they have been going through. These people live with these problems every single day.

Marxism is not just a theory to them. They fight it.

Here these countries are coming to us and saying please, please, listen to us. We are not opposed to you. We agree with your political philosophy. We want to see it flourish in this hemisphere. Why not give this a chance. Why not give these leaders an opportunity to try to do something.

Why do we find that such a repugnant notion? Why do we find that so violative of our own self-interest? Why do we want to isolate ourselves and put ourselves in a camp with Paraguay and

Chile, with a Stroessner and a Pinochet, as being where we come out on the side of history in this hemisphere?

I do not understand that?

Mr. SILBER. Well, Senator Dodd, I think the fact of the matter is that you are coming out on the side of Pinochet, you are coming out on the side of Stroessner, because you are coming out on the side of the Sandinistas. I don't think there is any ignorance by any member——

Senator DODD. I'm not coming out on the side of the Sandinistas.

You sound so much like the President and what he did in the debate when he said the only alternative to Marcos is the communists, when talking about the Philippines.

The poor Nicaraguans are caught between a rock and a hard place. I don't think they are terribly enthralled at all about the Sandinistas. But, my God, they don't want Enrique Bermudez running the country either.

Mr. SILBER. The Nicaraguans were not in a hard place until the Soviet Union, through Cuba, decided to distort and betray the democratic revolution against Somoza. Somoza was about as unpopular as any dictator in the history of Latin America, and I know something about that history having been a member of that Kissinger Commission.

The opposition to Somoza extended to every walk of life.

Senator DODD. Didn't you believe we should have supported Somoza, go down there and help him out and defend him? Didn't you take that position?

Mr. SILBER. No, I did not, and neither did any single member of that Kissinger Commission. I don't know what you are talking about.

Senator DODD. You did not buy the Kirkpatrick theory that you ought to go down and stand with Somoza and defend him, that the only alternative is——

Mr. SILBER. That is not Kirkpatrick's theory.

You know, I think that we ought to know some contemporary history, no less than some history of Latin America. That is not Kirkpatrick's position at all. That Somoza should have been removed is something that most Democrats believed in.

Senator DODD. You supported the removal of Somoza?

Mr. SILBER. Of course.

Senator DODD. Prior to 1979.

Mr. SILBER. But what I did not support was Mr. Carter's pride in having withdrawn force and support for Somoza and then his failure to support Eden Pastora. When I asked him on the Kissinger Commission why he had done one and not the other, he said that to support Pastora and the democratic forces of the revolution would have been to intervene.

When you cannot tell the difference—when you make a great distinction between intervening on behalf of democratic forces but not intervening in another case—I don't understand that.

I think that we had the obligation to withdraw support from Somoza. I am very glad we did. I deeply regret that we did not move immediately to support Eden Pastora, Robelo, Calero, and the democratic forces. Instead, when they were cut off from support by Venezuela after the loss of the election by Perez, they were left

with no support at all, and the monopoly on military weapons and financial support went to the Sandinistas. That is why they were in the cat bird seat in the summer of 1979.

It is very important to see that they were welcomed with open arms in the Congress. We gave them $117 million. They pledged themselves to the Organization of American States to have free elections, and they betrayed every one of those things. It has culminated in their final decree of October 15.

I think if the Democrats and the Republicans cannot understand that that adds up to totalitarianism and that totalitarianism should be removed, it will be a very black day for the history of the United States.

That goes back not only through the history of Latin America but through the history of Europe from 1933 forward.

Senator DODD. Doctor, why don't you spend a little time and read a little history in this region and then come and testify.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Dodd.

We thank both of you gentlemen for your testimony and for your patience in working through all of our questions. You have made a real contribution.

Mr. BELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. I would like now to call a panel consisting of Mr. Robert Leiken, senior associate, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, and Mr. Wayne Smith, School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University.

Gentlemen, we deeply appreciate your coming to this hearing today to offer testimony.

May I make the suggestion that you try to limit your opening testimony to about 10 minutes. I made that suggestion in vain earlier on and I apologize to you for the lateness of the hour.

In the event that you must go beyond 10 minutes, certainly that is permissible. But it will allow us more time for questioning and perhaps a free flowing dialog after you have concluded and before our hearing must end.

Mr. Leiken, would you please proceed first.

STATEMENT OF ROBERT S. LEIKEN, SENIOR ASSOCIATE, CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE

Mr. LEIKEN. OK.

I will do my best to be brief.

I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, and the members of the committee for your invitation to testify.

I am here as an independent witness in a scholarly capacity and my views are entirely personal.

I have included two documents for the record, giving a longer analysis of Nicaragua.

In Nicaragua, the Congress is faced with a complex and challenging task, and a situation for which there are no easy answers. The wave of Sandinista repression since October should have dispelled any remaining illusions that the Sandinistas are still a nationalist movement that responds to the needs and desires of its people.

Those who would again ask us to believe Sandinista promises do not deserve serious attention.

But, on the other hand, the forces we have been backing in Nicaragua, despite their broad support in the Nicaraguan countryside and the quiet sympathy of many urban Nicaraguans, have, as yet, shown little political or military effectiveness, little interest in developing a unified national movement against the Sandinistas, and little concern for democracy.

Yet, all of these are prerequisites for their success in Nicaragua and on Capitol Hill.

Congress faces an excrutiating dilemma: Should it approve the President's proposal for military aid to the resistance and underwrite a mainly reactionary leadership, unable to gain the full support of the Nicaraguan or the American people, or should it vote down military aid and face the inevitable consequences, both for Nicaragua and eventually for Central America, Mexico, and the United States, of a consolidated Soviet-backed Sandinista regime?

Will a stroke in time save nine, or will we be shooting ourselves in the foot? Or is there some third way out of this dilemma?

The Sandinistas will not, as they did last spring, make things easier for Congress. There will be no heaven-sent Ortega trip to Moscow. On the contrary, with the counsel of their international friends and patrons, the Sandinistas have launched a major diplomatic and public relations campaign aimed at convincing domestic and international opinion that they are "David" fighting against the U.S. "Goliath," and that they will be responsive and fair to their people, just as soon as the "gringo guns" are lowered.

But, after the events of October 1985, there are now few people still innocent or foolish enough to believe Sandinista promises.

I read in a recent op-ed piece in the New York Times that the Sandinista emergy provisions "are by no means as onerous in practice as they are on paper."

From February 8 to February 15, I participated as an observer on a mission to Nicaragua of the International League for Human Rights, which will be publishing its own report shortly. There was overwhelming evidence of an ongoing and intensifying campaign of intimidation, harassment, coercion, and even assassination, against religious groups, opposition political parties, the independent press, and trade unions.

According to Monsignor Bosco Vivas, auxiliary Bishop of Managua, more than 100 Catholic lay and religious workers and 50 Catholic priests have been detained and interrogated since October 1985. Evangelical ministers and lay workers have been subject to the same treatment.

Opposition political parties and trade unions have also been the object of this campaign, as have labor unions, professional organizations, and other independent groups, including human rights organizations in Nicaragua.

The situation on the Miskito coast, the human rights situation there, deserves a hearing of its own.

I would like to submit for the record an article from the New York Times by Steven Kinzer of February 8, which goes into that.

[See appendix.]

Mr. LEIKEN. We also talked to scores of political prisoners and their families. The International League for Human Rights estimates that there are now between 3,500 and 7,000 political prisoners in Nicaragua, not including 2,500 national guardsmen. It is impossible to be more precise because of the secrecy of Nicaragua's prisons and its state security apparatus.

There appear to be numerous clandestine state security prisons, and it became abundantly clear that prison conditions are extremely harsh, so harsh as to border on outright torture.

Political prisoners who are subject to solitary confinement in totally dark, subterranean cells, without sanitation facilities are denied food and water for as long as 4 days at a time. The prisoners and their families told us that prison authorities introduce homosexuals, criminals, and tuberculosis victims into the cells of political prisoners.

I will not go into any more grisly details. It is in my prepared statement.

It is now clear that the Sandinistas are not democratic, do not respect the rights and institutions of a majority of the people, their Indian minorities, or their neighbors. Most members of the political opposition, left, right, and center that I spoke to, saw military aid as a necessary condition for their survival, as a necessary instrument of pressure for bringing about change in Nicaragua.

But what about that instrument of pressure, the armed resistance.

Up to now, the United States has been married to one group, the UNO or the FDN. The FDN was created by the Argentinians and the CIA and there are now very strong ties of loyalty or fealty between members of our security apparatus and that organization.

The high command, as you well know, is based on the national guard, and has presided over a series of human rights atrocities. The FDN is run by a cabal, including particularly Adolfo Calero and Aristides Sanchez, who are related, and Calero's brother, Mario. These people have frustrated efforts to unify with other groups and to democratize the FDN.

Yet, nonetheless, the FDN does have a popular base, it does receive consistent aid from Nicaragua campesinos, it has grown enormously in numbers, to the point where it is larger proportionally in respect to its population than the Salvadoran guerrillas, significantly larger.

It also has a number of field commanders, who have been described to me as a collection of "Zapatistas" and "Pancho Villas," as peasant revolutionaries and revolutionary brigands.

The FDN's military situation has deteriorated in the last several months, mainly because of the FSLN's introduction of helicopters, heavy artillery, Cuban training, et cetera, but also becausae of the FDN's own weakness, its lack of weapons, its lack of training, and its lack of combat officers.

The lack of combat officers reflects the political biases of the FDN, which has been unwilling to recruit middleclass, urban cadres, whose political and ideological views do not coincide with their own, but who could form the political and military officers that are needed.

The disunity of the resistance, its failure to develop democratic leadership, has helped to isolate U.S. policy in Latin America, and this has been increased by the administration's invective and by the debt crisis.

I believe the only way out of this situation is to reform the resistance movement and for it and the United States to add a political-diplomatic component to its military policy. In particular, I believe military aid should be conditioned on the achievement of a unity of all the resistance forces who wish to fight against the Sandinistas, the reform of UNO, cutting off our special relationship with the Calero and Sanchez families, so that it becomes a democratic institution, that it has control over the purse strings, and that it has the capacity to demote soldiers and officers guilty of human rights abuses.

Military aid is desperately needed and on a scale large enough to be effective; but it must be accompanied by steps to improve the social, political, and ideological character of the resistance.

It is no secret that there is an atmosphere of bad faith between the administration and the Congress on the Nicaraguan question. Many Democrats have been reluctant to recognize the true situation in Nicaragua because they fear that that would vindicate the President. At the same time, the administration has itself often sought to exploit Nicaragua for narrow, domestic gains.

Last June, when the President wrote a letter to Representative David McCurdy, there was hope that this debilitating and self-destructive quarrel would end.

Many of us feel, however, that the administration has not truly fulfilled the promises of that letter.

Commenting on the President's promises, House Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill vowed that the Democrats would "hold him to his new position." Yet, Congress has done nothing to require that the President's promises be fulfilled.

Some Democrats argue that reforming the rebels is too difficult. But, in fact, they are amenable to reform, especially now. They are not a triumphalist army on the outskirts of Managua. But they are also no longer mercenaries striking from border sanctuaries.

Their movement now rests on a popular rebellion with new field commanders, more responsive to pressure both from within and without.

In any case, Managua's recent crackdown should have demostrated to Democrats that it will be even more difficult to reform the Sandinistas.

Do we have the will and capacity to establish and sustain a truly bipartisan Nicaraguan policy? Along with the elements I outlined earlier—the need to unify and restructure the opposition—such a policy requires a diplomatic track. The administration must make a good-faith effort to give Contadora a chance.

I do not believe Contadora's efforts at achieving peace and national reconciliation will be successful without military pressure. However, the administration should agree to delay after passage the delivery of military weaponry for an agreed-upon period in which Contadora and the Central American countries would attempt to reach a settlement.

We have seen in Afghanistan and in the Philippines that the American people are willing to support national and democratic movements in the Third World. The American people will support a national movement for democracy in Nicaragua, but will not support the narrow, ideological project of a sector of American and Nicaraguan society. They will support a true national resistance movement, but they will not support a proxy army.

This committee, which played such an instrumental role in forging a bipartisan policy for the Philippines, has the opportunity to play a similar role for Nicaragua today. That means putting aside partisan interests, demands historical imagination and not moral posturing, and requires strategic thinking and political valor.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Leiken.

I appreciate your statement, and your full text will be made a part of the record as will your supplements. We appreciate your summarizing.

Mr. Smith.

STATEMENT OF WAYNE S. SMITH, SCHOOL OF ADVANCED INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Chairman, it is a pleasure to be here and I appreciate the invitation.

I would like to begin by saying that I do not really think that these myths that one of the previous witnesses, Mr. Silber, mentioned have anything to do with the argument. I do not think anyone believes that the Sandinistas are great democrats. I think we all understand that these are Marxists. I regard them as adversaries and have no sympathy for them.

But even if one did accept everything that the previous witness, Mr. Silber, said about the nature of the Sandinistas, even if I accepted that, I would still oppose the administration's policy of funding the Contras because I do not think that is an effective policy.

I do not think that the Contras have the capability of defeating the Sandinistas, not now, not 2 years from now, and I think it is slightly absurd to think that we can buy them that capability with $100 million, or with $200 million or even $500 million.

They do not have the capability of overthrowing, of defeating, the Sandinistas, nor do they have the capability of pressuring or forcing the Sandinistas to do anything.

They have had 5 years to do it. We can talk about swelling numbers if we wish. The fact is that after 5 years, the Contras have been unable to take and hold a single, significant town. It remains essentially a border war.

I would submit that if they had the great popular support that they claim, that would not be the case.

We can continue to fund the Contras, and that will lead to nothing.

It seems to me that better alternatives are available, alternatives which would secure our objectives. We have the security objectives that have already been mentioned, and there is no doubt in my mind that they could be achieved through effective diplomacy.

Our best hope is to fully back the Contadora process, which we have not done and which we are not doing now.

I think, in fact, there is a parallel between the situation in the Philippines and the situation in Nicaragua. I think it is perfectly clear that, had the administration had its way, Cory Aquino would have had to accept the outcome of the election. The President seemed inclined to do that and the spokesmen in the White House chided Mrs. Aquino for not now getting on the bandwagon and accepting the results.

But the Filipino people would not have it.

This was a great victory for the Filipino people themselves, not for this administration, not for us, not for the United States. The Filipino people solved the problem.

I think that in this case in Central America, the Latins are trying to solve it, and we would be better off to let the Latins have the lead in this.

The administration says that we support the Contadora process, and yet, on February 10, when eight Latin American foreign ministers came to Washington to appeal to Secretary of State Shultz to stop aid to the Contras and to resume bilateral negotiations with the Sandinistas to cooperate with the Contadora process, we refused.

How, then, are we cooperating with the Contadora process?

In fact, we are not.

It is not true that the Sandinistas have refused to make concessions, that they are refusing to accept a Contadora agreement. As the previous witness said, they were prepared to sign the draft in September 1984. We refused—not to sign, but to accept it.

We all remember the National Security Council document at the time which bragged about having blocked Contadora efforts to put that treaty across.

Since that time, the treaty has changed somewhat in form, and the Sandinistas have had some reservations about the treaty. They have not said that they would refuse to accept it.

The basic thing that has changed and the central point which blocks progress on a Contadora agreement is the administration's refusal to cooperate or to sign a protocol. That is a sine qua non to the Nicaraguans. They cannot accept a Contadora act or treaty which leaves the United States free to do as it will. If they are going to be committed to pull Soviet and Cuban military personnel out of Nicaragua, they have to have some commitment from us that we would pull our personnel out of Honduras. We have to be prepared to sign such a protocol, which we, so far, are not willing to do.

I agree that there must be some force or at least threat of force in diplomacy so that it has teeth, and there must be here, too. I would submit that the Contras do not provide that force. They have not in 5 years been able to bring the Sandinistas around to anything. Our best bet is to cooperate with the Contadora, to bind the Sandinistas within these multilateral, these regional, agreements, under which they would be committed to halt any support to guerrillas, to reduce the size of their armies, to send home the Soviet and Cuban military advisors and a series of other steps, including, by the way, national reconciliation.

Then, if the Sandinistas violated those agreements, we would be in a position, with world public opinion and international law on our side, to move against them.

As it is, we are piddling around with this clandestine—not so clandestine, actually, but this supposedly clandestine—operation which accomplishes nothing and which is illegal, which has brought us to the point of refusing the jurisdiction of the world court, illegally mining harbors, and so forth.

The Sandinistas—and I have confirmed this in the past 2 days—the Sandinistas are prepared to resume negotiations with us immediately, to sit down with us at any time. They are also prepared to go on with negotiations within the context of the Contadora.

The single obstacle at this point to that is that they say there cannot be an agreement unless the United States would commit itself to respect the provisions of that agreement.

One of the other major reservations they had concerning military maneuvers apparently has been overcome.

The September 1984, draft which they would accept or said that they would sign the next day, would have eliminated military maneuvers. The draft that was subsequently brought forward would simply have restricted them. The Sandinistas say that is unacceptable. But one notes that in the Caraballeda declaration, that point is answered, and military maneuvers are now again to be totally suspended. So that point has been overcome.

The other objections that the Sandinistas have, with the single exception that the United States must agree to respect the provisions also, the other reservations are all relatively minor and could easily be worked out through negotiations.

So, we could have a Contadora agreement. We could have a diplomatic solution. We do not want a diplomatic solution because, I would submit, the objective of the administration is to get rid of the Sandinista government.

But that brings us to a dilemma. If our objective is to get rid of the Sandinista government, then we can only do it with our own troops. The Contras do not have the capability of doing that, and they will not.

So, if that is the objective, then the administration had best rev up the 82d and the 101st. If, on the other hand, we want to achieve these objectives, these sensible U.S. objectives, we can do that through diplomacy, and I would suggest that we ought to get down to it right away.

As a footnote, by the way, the provision by helicopters by Cuba to the Sandinistas is not a violation of the 1962 agreement.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Smith, for your testimony. Your full statement, of course, will be made a part of the record.

Senator Pell, do you have questions for the witnesses?

Senator PELL. I would like to give 5 minutes of my time to the Senator from Connecticut.

The CHAIRMAN. Very well.

For 5 minutes, Senator Dodd is recognized.

Senator DODD. I thank my colleague from Rhode Island, and I apologize again for all of the other things going on now here.

First of all, let me thank both of you for being here.

Bob Leiken, while I disagree with, I have a tremendous amount of respect for his knowledge and background of the history of this region. We have agreed on many occasions and we disagree a bit on this one.

I think your testimony is excellent. I am particularly glad to see clarification on the present makeup of the FDN leadership and the history of that a bit. It has not really been made clear in testimony we have had in the past, and I think that helps to some extent.

Let me just pick up the last point that Dr. Smith made. I agree with you. I think there has to be a military component to this. The question is where that military component comes and how effective it will be.

You mentioned in the conclusion of your testimony that there needs to be a strategy here. I consider the support of the Contra effort as a tactic that would, hopefully, lead to the acceptance of a broader policy. It seems to me that we have placed a great deal of emphasis on the tactic here and not enough on the policy. We are hoping the tactic works.

If I read the administration correctly—and I presume they are being honest about their position—the tactic is not to overthrow the Sandinista government, but merely to bring them to the point where they will decide to negotiate. I am not quite sure, if they are that successful, how you slow down the Contras at that particular juncture. But, assuming there is some magical point which occurs where the Contras will say "Well, we have gone this far and we will stop now," and the Sandinista say "We are fearful of losing so we will agree right now"—my concern is that this is more mythical than real. But the military component would seem to me more realistically to come at the end of this, at the back of this thing.

I equate this with an elongated Bay of Pigs approach, where in 1961, the military tactic was to create the general popular uprising less than 2 years after the success of Castro. For a variety of reasons, many would argue that we did not provide enough support at that particular juncture militarily, and had we, it would have succeeded. I am not so sure that is correct, that Castro was that unpopular, even at that point in Cuba.

At any rate, in 1962, the President was confronted with a more serious problem, the missile crisis, and of course that went to the OAS first and we got that broad-based support, and then, of course, threatened military action if, in fact, we did not achieve the results through a broader policy approach.

What do you see that is wrong, or what are your arguments against that particular approach, going the Contadora route, trying that, with the backup provision that if, in fact, we find the deescalation of military hardware, the removal of Cuban and Soviet troops, and so forth, all of these stated goals that we have, if that were not achieved, then we would be in a better position, a better position hemispherically and I think internally in this country, to argue for a military option?

Why is that not a preferable approach?

Mr. LEIKEN. There are a couple of reasons, Senator Dodd.

First of all, it would involve sending a message to Central America and to the Contras, which I think would be very negative. We

do have a movement which exists. To ask it to disband in the hope, by my reading this, that by some small odds the Sandinistas would observe the kind of treaty that you are talking about, is, I think, very unwise.

Part of the problem, the way we have been conceptualizing it, and with some of the things that Wayne Smith has said earlier, is that we do not recognize that a national liberation movement takes time to develop.

The FDN, in its current form, has existed for about 3 years. It took the Vietnamese and the Chinese more than a decade of fighting before they had a viable guerrilla force. The FMLN has been in the mountains of El Salvador for nearly 15 years.

The Contras have been experiencing growing pains, pains of institutionalization and unity pains. They are still in their "diapers" as a movement.

To disband them now I think would make it very difficult to rebuilt them.

Senator DODD. But the problem is, while they may be in their diapers, the Sandinistas are not, and the stated goal of getting the Sandinistas to do certain things—I mean, we are having just the opposite effect.

Mr. LEIKEN. Well, I don't think so.

The Sandinistas would have moved much more rapidly in the direction that they have moved had there not been a resistance movement. All of the political opposition agrees with that.

I certainly do not see a Nicaraguan population united around the Sandinistas.

Senator DODD. But you do not see them uniting around the Contras, either.

Mr. LEIKEN. Well, I don't know. Certainly in the countryside they are. I think in the city, if you changed—again, I go back to this point—if you united the different segments, ideologically and politically, of the opposition——

The CHAIRMAN. I'm sorry, but I have to interrupt at this point. Senator Pell has 5 minutes left. I apologize for interrupting you in midstream.

Senator DODD. Bob, I'm sure you and I are going to have plenty of opportunities to go over this.

Mr. LEIKEN. I hope so, Senator.

Senator DODD. Unfortunately too much.

Senator PELL. Thank you very much, indeed, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DODD. And thank you, Senator Pell, for your time.

Senator PELL. First, I would ask unanimous consent to have inserted into the record at this point an article by Tom Wicker in today's New York Times.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection, it is so ordered.

[See appendix.]

Senator PELL. Secondly, I would like to express my very real regard for Mr. Smith, who I think knows as much about the Cuba situation, from which so much of this stems, as any person I have become acquainted with or know.

I have a little question of history. The previous witness, Mr. Silber, said that the arrangement between Khrushchev and Kennedy involved a promise on the part of the Cubans not to propagan-

dize their view in Latin America. My recollection of the exchange was that in return for not invading Cuba, there would be no Soviet nuclear missiles placed in Cuba.

Which view is correct?

Mr. SMITH. Senator, your view is correct. There were only three provisions. If the Soviets would withdraw their offensive weapons systems and those were defined as nuclear missiles, and we insisted also on bombers—the Soviets never accepted that the bombers were part of it, but withdrew them anyway—in any event, the withdrawal of the Soviet offensive weapons systems, then we would undertake to give a no invasion pledge and to lift our naval blockade.

There was no pledge on the part of the Cubans that they would not attempt to export revolution.

Subsequently, in a press conference, President Kennedy stated that there could be peace in the hemisphere if the weapons were not reintroduced and the Cubans did not try to export revolution.

I think that was a realistic recognition on President Kennedy's part that this was a problem we would have to face, but not necessarily at the nuclear level. In other words, we would go to the mat, we would risk global confrontation and conflagration, if the Soviets tried to reintroduce missiles. But we would not necessarily go to the threat of full exchange, full nuclear exchange, over every shipment of rifles that the Cubans might make.

So, the shipment of Cuban helicopters to Nicaragua is in no way a violation of the 1962 understanding.

Senator PELL. Having had the opportunity to go over your book of essays, for which you were kind enough to let me do the preface, I wonder if you could talk, in my remaining time, about how you feel we could approach this problem from the point of view of defanging Cuba and trying to stabilize relations. Wouldn't that contribute to a real solution trying to stabilize relations with Nicaragua?

In other words, the Nicaraguan infection is an extension of the Cuban infection.

Mr. SMITH. Well, Senator, I think that Cuba is a part of this. Its role in the Central American problem has perhaps been exaggerated somewhat, but it is a party and it is involved. I think we have to take cognizance of that.

This is why I do not understand when the Cubans say they are willing to discuss this with us, with a view toward finding solutions, we refuse. It seems to me we should be insisting that the Cubans sign a protocol to the Contadora agreement under which they also would commit themselves to respect its provisions, that they would not ship arms to Nicaragua or anywhere else in Central America, that their advisers, their military personnel, would come home and so forth.

Rather than that, to me, inexplicably, the administration took the position that Cuba should not sign a protocol in any way.

Senator PELL. Finally, how many of the Cubans in Nicaragua are there in a military capacity and how many of them are there, in your view, in a civilian, teaching or nursing, capacity?

Mr. SMITH. Senator, I really have no way of determining that. The administration says there are thousands of military personnel,

and the Nicaraguans and the Cubans say there are about 700. I would suspect that the truth is somewhere in between.

Senator PELL. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Pell.

Senator Kassebaum.

Senator KASSEBAUM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Smith, I would only say that when you commented that the Sandinistas have said they were ready to resume negotiations, that tends to be a position they take, usually when we start debate here on what our policies are going to be toward Nicaragua.

Mr. SMITH. Not at all, Senator. It is a position they have been taking consistently over the past 18 months.

Senator KASSEBAUM. Well——

Mr. SMITH. I was in Managua in July, and they took that position then.

Senator KASSEBAUM. I am afraid I view it with somewhat of a jaundiced eye.

I do think that the quandary that we are in has been well laid out here back and forth. Nicaragua obviously is suffering from economic chaos, and with the crackdown on civil liberties that was imposed by the government in October, I think there is growing heartfelt opposition to the Sandinista government.

Just what our role should be in assisting that opposition I think is really the question.

I think, Mr. Leiken, you laid out in the two articles that you have done in the New York Review books a good background on all of the players and the situation as it exists. You talk about unification of the opposition and reform.

What is the major stumbling block in your view—and yours, too, Mr. Smith—on the unification of all of the armed opposition?

Mr. LEIKEN. Well, the major stumbling block is a section of the UNO-FDN leadership that I mentioned earlier. There are problems also with Eden Pastora and with some of the other leaders who tend to be individualists. But I think that, right now, the chances would be very good and are very good for uniting the movement, as long as the administration plays its hand evenly.

We have given vigorous but tacit support to a small sector of the movement. That has been the main stumbling block.

Senator KASSEBAUM. Is this why UNO, for instance, has not been able to develop any real political base inside Nicaragua with the opposing forces there?

Mr. LEIKEN. It depends on what you mean by "political base." In the countryside, FDN as well as the other groups have overwhelming support. What they have not been able to do is establish an infrastructure and a territorial base, and in a certain sense a political base, because they have not had sufficient middle level officers and "political commisars," if you will, capable of carrying out that very technical and secret work.

The relationship of officers to troops in the FDN is about 1 to 100 or 200. In the FMLN, it is about 1 to 8, or 1 to 10.

This means two things. One is that they do not have enough people to go and organize the unorganized. Most of these people are peasants and who are not particularly good at organizational techniques and clandestivity and have not been trained in them.

Second, it is that the FDN is not able to break down into small columns, the way the FLMN and other guerrilla groups do. So, when they face the artillery of the Sandinistas or the helicopters, they cannot divide into groups of 20 and disappear into the hills. They sometimes get slaughtered.

So, that means that among their biggest defects are lack of training and young men and women from the cities and from diverse political sections of the educated youth of Nicaragua. These people have been resisting the draft and deserting the army, the Sandinista army, and right now many of them are in Costa Rica and Honduras.

Senator KASSEBAUM. What can we do to help improve the effectiveness? Is removing some of the personalities feasible? You mentioned Calero and Bermudez.

Mr. LEIKEN. It goes back to the three things I have been emphasizing. One is unity. If the so-called southern front, the groups that have been associated with Eden Pastora and Alfredo Cesar and Brooklyn Rivera and others were brought into this, you would get a different ideological complexion which would permit others to join who have not up to now.

Second, if you democratized the UNO, that is, let the UNO choose its own leadership rather than have it imposed on it, this too would have a similar effect.

Finally, there should be the promotion of some of the FDN field commanders into political positions and into higher military positions. Many of these are populists, who have nationalist feelings, who are not out for vengeance, for getting their lands back, the way some of the leadership of the FDN is.

Finally, there is U.S. training. These new combat officers and organizers would have to be trained. I don't see anyone else about to do it.

Senator KASSEBAUM. Mr. Smith, do you have any comment on this?

Mr. SMITH. My only comment, Senator, would be that these forces were essentially organized by our own security apparatus and we would be asking a security apparatus to reform its own creation. I just do not think it would work.

I think that is too dicey a proposition.

Senator KASSEBAUM. But some of the equation has changed since that organization took place. I would agree. I think that has posed problems. But I think, as the Sandinista government has become more repressive, then the opposition has developed some different characteristics.

Mr. SMITH. Senator, there are two ways of looking at that.

I agree that the Sandinista government has become more repressive. But, to me, that simply means that our policy is a total failure. We have not in 5 years moved the Sandinistas toward liberalization, nor should we expect to. I mean, a sophomore in college knows that you do not bring about internal liberalization by mounting an external threat. It almost never works that way. It has not in this case, either.

In fact, we have not achieved any of our objectives through the Contras because I think the Contras are a very, very weak instru-

ment, in fact, an impossible instrument, to work with, and I just do not think they can be reformed personally.

Senator KASSEBAUM. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Kassebaum.

Senator Pressler.

Senator PRESSLER. I am trying to understand one thing.

Could each of you comment on the Nicaraguan Government's policies toward their native Indians. I have heard horror stories on that and have read your statements on it.

There is a big piece today in The Washington Times from Russell Means, a statement on it.

What is the motivation in your response? Why is the Nicaraguan Government carrying out these brutal activities, if they are? What do they have to gain from it? Are they getting resistance from the Indians? Apparently the stories are true. What are they accomplishing?

Mr. SMITH. Senator, I think some of these stories are almost certainly true. The Sandinistas themselves admit that they have made serious mistakes in their handling of the Indians.

It would seem to me that the principal problem is that the Indians wish to continue to lead their traditional way of life in a semi-autonomous way. They do not want to follow the dictates and the system imposed upon them from Managua. That, of course, to the government in Managua, is unacceptable.

I think there is some inherent conflict there, but the government's way of handling it certainly is reprehensible. I would think that one thing that the Contadora countries would wish to do is to address this problem.

Mr. LEIKEN. May I comment?

Senator PRESSLER. Sure.

Mr. LEIKEN. The Sandinistas talk about mistakes. If they, in fact, believe that they had made mistakes, one would expect them to rectify the mistakes. There is and has been a fairly simple solution.

One of the leading Miskito groups, Misurasata, led by Brooklyn Rivera, has engaged in peace talks with them. Those talks were broken off after the Sandinistas violated a cease-fire with them.

The fact is that the Sandinistas face, on the Atlantic coast, now, a full-scale rebellion. They are trying to put it down through aerial bombardments. They strafe villages, they have wounded noncombatants and have killed them. Just now, as you indicated, there was a trip to Nicaragua by Russell Means and others who accompanied Brooklyn Rivera. The New York Times had an article, the one that I submitted for the record, which photographed a crater made by rockets and 500-pound bombs, which were dropped by government planes on the Indian villages.

The Nicaraguan Government was fully aware of the situation. This was no field commander running wild. Along with its own military information, the government received protests via its Washington embassy and directly that Brooklyn Rivera was there and that he was being attacked.

Nonetheless, they continued to pursue Rivera and his companions. He succeeded in escaping through a miraculous, remarkable collaboration of the Miskito elders in the villages and the entire

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people who got Rivera and his group out of there. One of the leaders lost his leg and is now languishing in a hospital in Bogota.

This is a group which has not received U.S. support, which the Sandinistas have not been able to label Contras, which have been fighting simply for Indian rights.

This it is not only a question of "mistakes," this is not merely reprehensible, it is an emblem of the kind of relationships that the Central Americans can expect from the Sandinistas. This is a non-Nicaraguan, if you will, or noncentral Nicaraguan people. They are national minorities, as neighbors of the Sandinistas.

One of the things that I think alarms the Costa Ricans and the Hondurans is if the Nicaraguans treat the Miskitos this way, when the situation is more favorable to them, how will they treat their neighbors.

So far, the evidence is fairly clear that the Sandinistas do have similar kinds of designs on their other neighbors.

So, I would say that we should look at the situation in the Atlantic coast as a kind of forecast of what to expect from the Sandinistas in the long run in Central America.

Senator PRESSLER. I would like each of you to give your view of something that is intellectually fascinating to me, and that is why the church groups, bishops, priests, Lutheran ministers, and Methodists throughout the United States have such a romance with Nicaragua, with the Nicaraguan Government. I do not say this in any critical way. I brought this up the other day, when Secretary Shultz was here, when I urged that the President, with his great persuasive powers, have in a large group of bishops, especially from the Midwest. One of my colleagues said that his capital city was about to become the sister city of Managua, or whatever.

The point is there is a romance that has gone on here. Groups from my State go to Minneapolis and go down on an airplane as a group and take a tour, a 2-week tour, of Nicaragua, and they come back as feverish advocates. They meet me at all my meetings, and so forth. I am glad to see them, but I have been trying intellectually to put this together because it does not add up with a lot of the things that I hear.

What is the reason for the intellectual romance between our ministers, priests, churchmen and the Sandinistas? I know that traditionally they are more liberal. But leaving allowances for that, how would you answer.

Mr. SMITH. Well, I can't really say I know, Senator. I am not a member of one of those church groups.

But I suspect it has something to do with their perception that our policy is wrong and immoral.

There may be some who have some sympathy with the Sandinistas. I have, in fact, talked to some church people who have gone down and who have come back singing the praises of the Sandinistas.

In part, that may have to do with the fact that, you know, this is not the dungeon that we say it is. It certainly is not a democracy. It is not the kind of society I would wish to live in. But one has to acknowledge that they have, in terms of providing education, medical care and so forth to the poor, achieved something. Perhaps these achievements have impressed the church groups.

But I think, more than anything else, it has to do with our own policy.

In other words, it is a reaction to what the church groups perceive as a wrongheaded and immoral policy and what they perceive to be an immoral policy on the part of the United States.

Mr. LEIKEN. I would put it a little bit differently.

The Nicaraguan poet, Pablo Antonio Cuadra, said in a poem called "Nicaragua, 1984," some people in the metropolitan countries, imagine paradises and back "paradises" in the Third World, while those in the Third World have to live in the actual infernos that you sustain by imagining them to be paradises.

There has been historically—and this is an old story—a tendency for certain intellectuals and others in the West to want to believe that the latest paradise that they are hearing about is, finally the real paradise.

As Wayne says, there is a domestic political component to this. Many people see Nicaragua as the symbol of a Reagan administration with which they differ on a lot of other questions.

Third, I got part of the answer to this question on my last trip, in talking to some Nicaraguan extravel agents and taxi drivers who had been run out of business by the Sandinista government. The government has an "in-tourist service," big buses, etc. The Nicaraguans said that many of the visitors, such as you describe, get on this bus from the airport and, in effect, never get off it. They are with Sandinista guides, who, in fact, belong to the security services, and they are steered in a certain direction.

Never having gone on one of those tours, I was always puzzled as to how so many people could come back from Nicaragua with this view. Did they go into the shantytowns and see the distended stomachs of the people and talk with them, did they talk to the peasants, did they have a chance to speak in Spanish with the Nicaraguan people? If they did, I think they would have very different views.

But this is a package tour, and people come down with certain expectations, and those expectations get fulfilled.

Finally, I think there is a sophisticated propaganda apparatus in Nicaragua, supported by the Cubans and others and in this country, which tends to broadcast these views. Whether those views are right or wrong, that apparatus exists. I am not saying they are a bunch of Communists who should be brought into hearings of a House Un-American Activities Committee, but this is a reality.

Senator PRESSLER. Well, the cardinal down there has made very strong statements critical of the regime, but that does not seem to get through. These are public statements.

When the Pope was there, he was treated very badly, to put it mildly.

It does not all add up.

Mr. LEIKEN. There is this image that the cardinal is a conservative, that he represents the elite.

In fact, Obando y Bravo, on two occasions, was chosen by the Sandinistas to mediate with Somoza. He got their prisoners released. He made a statement within the first few months of the revolution supporting socialism. But he called for a libertarian kind of socialism or a democratic socialism.

But many people are hostage of an image created by interested parties and tend to discount what the cardinal says. I wish they could talk to more of the parishoners as well as the cardinal.

Senator PRESSLER. My final question is this.

What would you predict would happen in a 2- or 3-year period if we gave Nicaragua benign neglect, that is, did not appropriate any money for the Contras and just dropped our activities, though not completely? What probably would happen?

Mr. LEIKEN. Well, I think we should not look at it, in the first place, in a 2- or 3-year period.

The Sandinistas and their international sponsors have a long-term strategy as in Afghanistan. There the Soviets are educating a new generation of youth, they have given up on the current generation. They send them to the Soviet Union to be educated.

In the same way in Nicaragua, there are numbers of youth who are being sent out of the country and who are being indoctrinated inside the country.

The Sandinistas will wait for what they call a favorable "correlation of forces." They will wait for an administration that they think will be more benign. But, even before waiting, they will begin and have begun to develop guerrilla movements, subversive movements, in these countries—not revolutionary movements interested in bringing about change in those countries, but movements interested in forwarding Sandinista/Cuban and Soviet goals.

There are various estimates of how many Costa Ricans are now fighting with the Sandinistas or are being trained with them. The estimates range from 400 to as many as 2,000.

They have already sent two guerrilla columns into Honduras, which have been defeated. They have been supporting the Salvadoran FMLN in various ways.

I think that what they will do is increase low-intensity warfare, counting on what an earlier witness described as the appeasement reaction of countries like Costa Rica and Honduras, facing a military machine such as has never been known in Central America, and without support from the United States, and will eventually, either as one witness said, Finlandize them or create the internal conditions to force them into policies consistent with the Sandinistas' long, incremental policy.

Speaking of "incremental," I think they will do the same things in terms of their military buildup as the Cubans did; by slow, hardly detectible steps, as the Cubans have from the mid-1960's to the present, introduce increasingly modern, more offensive, military equipment as they train their army even more fully than today.

And, Mexico should not be left out.

I lived for 8 years in Mexico. I have been back there twice in the last year. I think the PRI's dominance of Mexico may be reaching an end. No one knows what will ensue, but certainly a movement, such as I am describing in Central America, will make the situation much, much worse—as will, I might add, a U.S. invasion in Central America.

Mr. SMITH. Senator, I think a policy of benign neglect would be wrong. If we did nothing, I think the Sandinistas would, indeed, move in directions that would give us real problems.

The Contras, in my view, do not solve the problem. I think it could be solved through imaginative and effective diplomacy.

It has been said several times here that we have to give aid to the Contras to force the Sandinistas to negotiate. The Sandinistas are ready to negotiate now. The single thing they are not ready to do is to negotiate with the Contras, and they will not be ready to negotiate with them. They will not negotiate with them this year, next year, or ever.

They are ready to negotiate with us, and the reason they are is because they understand the power factors involved here.

They understand perfectly well that we are the dominant force here and could wipe them out any time we wanted to, and they think that we probably will, that we will eventually come to an invasion, and it is to head that off that they are ready to sign agreements.

I would suggest that we ought to bind them to these agreements, that they ought to be verifiable, and we would have provisions for moving against them if they did violate them.

As things stand now, we have nothing to go on.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Pressler.

Let me ask just a few questions.

Mr. Leiken, in your testimony, you have indicated that on October 15, Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega announced "emergency measures" that virtually suspended all Nicaraguan civil liberties, including the rights of speech, assembly, personal security, freedom of the press, movement, and the right to form labor organizations and to strike. Then you go on to detail that you had read in an op-ed piece in The New York Times on February 14 of this year that "these emergency provisions are by no means as onerous in practice as they are on paper."

You say, then, that from February 8 to February 15, you participated as an observer on a mission to Nicaragua of the International League for Human Rights.

Was that this year?

Mr. LEIKEN. Yes; it was headed by Nina Shea, program director of the league, and included also Patricia Derian, the former Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights in the Carter Administration.

They are going to be issuing their own report.

The CHAIRMAN. Ms. Derian was a member.

Who were other members of the group?

Mr. LEIKEN. Joe Onek, a lawyer who I think was the Vice Counsel for President Carter's White House; Nina Shea, of the International League, a lawyer; and a translator from Amnesty International.

The CHAIRMAN. Now this group, according to your testimony, found overwhelming evidence of an on-going and intensifying campaign of intimidation, harassment, coercion, even assassination, against religious groups, opposition political parties, the independent press and trade unions. You quote Monsignor Bosco Vivas, Auxiliary Bishop of Managua, as saying that more than 100 Catholic lay and religious workers and 50 Catholic priests have been detained and interrogated just since October 1985. You note that Evangelical priests and lay workers were accorded essentially the

same treatment; you cite as well the banning on national television of the Catholic mass, the shutting down of the Catholic radio station, suppression of the Catholic newspaper, confiscation of the press, the welfare office, and so forth.

These points are certainly applicable, I suspect, to Senator Pressler's question. The romance of church groups with the Sandinistas is, indeed, difficult to understand.

Mr. LEIKEN. Yes.

Let me just qualify something. These are my conclusions. The league will issue its own report. I do not want to speak for the league. That should be forthcoming shortly.

But I was along with the group.

The CHAIRMAN. These are your conclusions, and you have been in Nicaragua within the last month.

Mr. LEIKEN. Yes; right.

The CHAIRMAN. So, you are following up the suppression of civil liberties pursuant to the emergency measures at October 15.

Now, you have noted that the International League for Human Rights is in possession of a list of 57 members of the Independent Liberal Party, various other political parties, labor unions, professional organizations, and so forth, containing the names of people whose rights have been suppressed, or whom have been incarcerated in some cases.

Further, on page 6 of your testimony, you say that the International League for Human Rights estimates that there are now between 3,500 and 7,000 political prisoners in Nicaragua, and that it is impossible to be more precise because of the secrecy that surrounds the Nicaraguan prisons and state security apparatus.

You go on to detail harsh conditions, and, in fact, torture.

This, I suspect, is very important, eyewitness and current testimony for individuals who have tended to view the Sandinistas as conducting a benign revolution for the benefit of the people.

In fact, your testimony really goes on to point out, as Senator Pressler indicated, the problems of the Miskito Indians, a fairly good example of how the Sandinistas treat defenseless people.

In the absence of any resistance or pressure, any assurances offered to Guatemala, Costa Rica, or Honduras regarding Sandinista actions ring rather hollow.

Mr. LEIKEN. And, of course, it is all done in the context of legality. This is to he who hopes to bind the Sandinistas to international agreements should be aware that the Sandinistas are doing all of this supposedly in a legal framework and, in fact, contrary to the very promises that brought them to power.

Mr. SMITH. The Sandinistas, Senator, would not be able to invade Costa Rica or Honduras legally.

The CHAIRMAN. Why not? Why would they simply not go right across?

Mr. SMITH. They know perfectly well that if they did invade Honduras, we would come to Honduras' assistance.

The CHAIRMAN. Is that for certain? Have we committed our forces?

Mr. SMITH. We would love for them to do that.

I would assume that is the reason we have spent something like $100 million to build advance bases in Honduras and why we shut-

tle thousands of troops in and out of there under the guise of maneuvers.

The reason we need these regional agreements, which would include nonaggression pacts and so forth, would be to provide the umbrella for all sides to come to the assistance of any party that did come under attack.

It is not a matter of saying if we move with the Contadora, no one will have any guarantees. It is precisely to provide those guarantees that we need to support the Contadora, which we do not.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Smith, I just find no support in any authoritative testimony that anyone has promised American troops to defend anybody in these circumstances. I think it is a convenient point of argument that somehow, if the worst happens, the United States is going to land on Nicaragua with all fours.

You know, what we are really talking about around here is a modest $100 million for 6,000 to 20,000 Nicaraguans who want to fight for their country, not an international conflict in which our forces are involved.

Mr. SMITH. We are talking about $100 million that does not accomplish anything. What I am suggesting is if you had regional agreements and it were clear that the United States would come to the support of those regional agreements, you would not have an international conflagration. Then the Sandinistas would not dare to invade Honduras or Costa Rica or anyone else.

Let's do make it clear that we would come to their support. That is my point.

The CHAIRMAN. I think it is a good point. It is an interesting fact that in most polls, Americans indicate by very large majorities, that they are not prepared to commit the first American boy or girl to any country in Central America. Whether that is a sad fact or not, it is a fact.

We really do not have popular support on behalf of all of the steps that you are suggesting.

What we really have is a very tough situation in which, at the margin, the American people may support Nicaraguans who are willing to fight for Nicaragua, but they certainly have not committed themselves to all of these additional measures.

Mr. SMITH. I think you would have popular support, Senator, if our policy were legal. I mean, the American people have been put off by the present policy, in which we have illegally mined harbors, rejected the jurisdiction of the world court, printed assassination manuals, and all that sort of thing.

They have no confidence in this policy.

I think they would have confidence in a policy that was based squarely on international law and that had public opinion, world public opinion behind it.

At this point, we have the lukewarm support of El Salvador and Honduras for our policies, and possibly of Stroessner in Paraguay and Pinochet in Chile. The other Latin American governments do not support our aid to the Contras or our approach to the Nicaraguan problem.

The American people know that. It is one reason they themselves have reservations.

Mr. LEIKEN. Could I comment on some of these, Senator?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes; but let me just add one other element to the discussion.

You have said, Mr. Leiken, and I think quite correctly, that the Congress faces an excruciating dilemma: Should it approve the President's proposal for military aid and underwrite what you have termed a mainly reactionary leadership, unable to gain full support of the Nicaraguan or the American people or should it vote down military aid and face the inevitable consequences, as you see them, both for Nicaragua and eventually for Central America, Mexico, and the United States—a consolidated, Soviet-backed Sandinista regime?

It appears to me that this is a dilemma that is indeed excruciating.

You have proposed at least one path out of it, and indeed the only one that I have heard this morning; namely, reform of this group that you have termed "reactionary" and that Mr. Smith has termed "ineffectual" or has suggested is beyond reform. That is an interesting question in itself. Can the resistance movement be reformed? If it can, should this be the thrust of American policy at this point in time? Are such basic reforms of the resistance movement a basic prerequisite to the development of stronger public support for the administration's policy, particularly if the resistance elements continue to press their demands for negotiations leading to free elections?

Why do you believe that elements of the resistance movement can be reformed?

Mr. LEIKEN. Because first of all, there have been reform movements even within the FDN, especially among the field commanders. On two occasions FDN regional commandantes came and protested against the current leadership.

I do not think the big problem, by the way, is Colonel Bermudez. My impression is that he himself is not the problem so much as his link with Calero and Sanchez.

If that link were severed, there are democratic elements in the field, in command positions. In addition, the other armed groups have always had the same kinds of criticisms that we have been making of the FDN and if they were included in this package, the balance of power within this national resistance would shift.

Third, already we are seeing a growing unity movement inside Nicaragua, embracing everyone from the left to the right. Even the Communists and the socialists to some extent have been uniting with the other parties. If that were replicated on the outside, it would serve to create I think a broad movement and to strengthen the movement inside and to give it a different character.

The armed resistance can be reformed because the United States has been responsible for its current character. If we were to shift our policy, we have the leverage to institute reform. Finally, I believe it can reform because Nicaraguans want to reform it. They want a democratic movement.

We say we support a democratic revolution in Central America. This means institutions and constitutionality. The Nicaraguans who fought against Somoza fought for precisely that. They are today the main force of the resistance movement.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Smith, do you see any possibility of reform, or is it simply a futile gesture to promote that objective at this point?

Mr. SMITH. Senator, as I already have said, and I will stick with it, I do not really think the Contras can be reformed. I do not think they are an effective instrument of policy and I do not think they can be turned into one.

The CHAIRMAN. So, essentially, if we were to follow your course, we are left with another attempt at diplomacy; and, failing that, if the Sandinistas violate the concords, use of our own armed forces to rectify the situation?

Mr. SMITH. Yes; another attempt at diplomacy, absolutely, which I think can be effective. I think it would be effective. The Sandinistas have already indicated a willingness to sign on most counts, provided the United States is willing to respect the provisions of the agreement also.

If they violate the agreement, then the United States can move against them under international law. We have the Rio Pact.

What I have always wondered is if the administration regards the Sandinistas as intolerable, if we think that they are a threat and we must remove them, why have we not used the machinery of the Rio Treaty and gone to the OAS and asked for sanctions against them and asked to move against them? We have not done any of that.

Mr. LEIKEN. Part of the reason is that the Latin Americans have a grievance against the United States which has nothing to do with Central America. It has to do mainly with historical and internal political questions and the debt.

Here the administration has made a major mistake. It has been attempting to clobber the Mexicans and others with the debt situation, to get them to support our Central American policy.

What I would do is to make concessions on the debt, in fact, to organize a major international conference on the debt. That might deflate a great deal of the Latin American opposition to our Central American policy, because they do not like the Sandinistas any better than we do, and they are very disturbed and worried about the Sandinistas. But they find it difficult to make public statements against them, still less supportive of the United States, given the political and economic conditions that exist today.

I would say one thing more.

If Contadora is violated, unless some of these things change, unless you had a more democratic foreign policy, the Contadora countries would in effect back Sandinistas in the same way that they have today. It's not because they support the Sandinistas, but because of their opposition to the United States.

So, we would be back in the same situation again.

On the other hand, I have talked to Central Americans. I have just recently talked to high-level Guatemalan foreign officials, and I have talked in the last month with a number of Central Americans, who have told me that if the resistance had a different character, such as I have been trying to outline, they would find—they do not want to get involved in a U.S. debate, so they are not going to make a statement one way or the other, and have not—but they would find it much more easy to support United States policy in

the region if they were not afraid that what would be installed in Nicaragua would be a repressive regime which would cause them other kinds of problems in the region.

The CHAIRMAN. Let us take a situation in which the aid is not voted by the Congress and therefore the Contras begin to fold up and we head down the negotiation trail. Let us assume further that we tentatively arrive at some agreements, but the Sandinistas, given the lack of any particular military pressure, decide to violate them.

Mr. Smith is saying under the Rio Treaty, we would have international law behind us should we decide to enforce the agreements.

Mr. SMITH. And hopefully under the Contadora agreement itself, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. But that still raises this question for me as to whose military forces would be utilized under the Rio Treaty, international law or not?

Is there a suggestion that U.S. troops will be involved? I have not heard suggestions by any other country in Central America or South America, even those fully supportive of the Rio Treaty, that they were prepared to devote the first soldiers to enforcing any such agreements.

You know, in the event that the Sandinistas violate any such agreements, someone will suggest that we ought to sit down and negotiate again because, absent an indigenous resistance movement or the direct and immediate introduction of U.S. forces, there will be nothing with which to contain Sandinista military actions.

Mr. SMITH. I think U.S. military force would have to be an element, without any question. If the Sandinistas violated the agreement, if they moved against their neighbors, if they refused, after having signed the agreement, to send the Soviet and military advisors home, then I think sanctions would have to be taken.

As I say, if they moved against their neighbors, I think we should come to the support of those neighbors. All sorts of diplomatic possibilities are there, between that extreme situation and the present.

Mr. LEIKEN. The direct use of U.S. military force would be the worst possible outcome of this situation, in terms of our international position and in terms of our relations with Latin America. That is No. 1.

No. 2, I think Wayne is right. This will be the only alternative.

No. 3, I think we will be faced with that alternative for the reasons I have suggested.

Therefore, it seems to me inescapable that we should adopt a different policy.

This conflict is usually portrayed as a problem between Nicaragua and the United States. The reason that the Contras have become a mass movement in Nicaragua is because Nicaragua itself has become polarized. You do not create a counterrevolutionary movement of that dimension or a revolutionary movement of that dimension from the outside.

The real question is will the Sandinistas achieve national reconciliation as part of Contadora. They have shown no signs of even being willing to talk to their internal civic opposition, which they now tell me they regard as just a fifth column.

So, there seems small hope of national reconciliation unless Contadora is backed up by the threat of U.S. miltiary pressure. That I think might make Contadora work. I could conceive several possible outcomes.

One, it is possible that the Sandinistas would decide to accept a new election, such as the six political parties have proposed. Their thinking then would be very similar to the Guatemalan military, which accepted elections and took a back seat: "We will hold on the army, we will bide our time. Yes, we will lose these elections, but our turn will come around again. In any event, we will resist the democratizing of the army and that will be our bastion of power."

That is one scenario.

Another scenario would be a division among the Sandinistas. It is possible that Humberto Ortega, who controls the army and is more pragmatic, would opt in the face of other, more unpleasant, alternatives for a settlement.

Of course, the third is if the Sandinistas would not go for elections or would not negotiate with their opposition, internal and external, they would face military defeat. All these are possible if the United States adopts a bipartisan policy and understands that this has to be a protracted commitment.

But the people of Nicaragua would support the resistance movement, and that really is the key element. Once they have the arms to offset the Soviet and the Cuban arms and the training to offset Soviet and Cuban training, they could eventually defeat the Sandinistas.

The CHAIRMAN. Both of you are long-time students of Latin American affairs and I would defer to your judgment on this. I take it from Mr. Leiken's point that, whether we have the Rio Treaty behind us or not, the involvement of American forces in Nicaragua is likely to be perceived as interventionism in a historical sense. It appears to me that this is something to be devoutly avoided if we can do so for all sorts of reasons.

I suppose the other problem that bothers me is the one just mentioned by Mr. Leiken. Even if the Sandinistas were to pledge to get rid of the Soviet, East German, Cuban, and other advisers, to reduce the size of the Nicaraguan armed forces, and to abstain from intervening in the affairs of its neighbors, are we to turn a blind eye to the acts of internal repression practiced by the Sandinista regime against the Indians, church leaders, and political opponents, et cetera. In short, should renunciation by the Sandinistas of their involvement with external powers and outside forces constitute a sufficient price for us to abandon our concerns and pressures for truly democratic internal reforms in Nicaragua and allow the Sandinista revolution to proceed unchallenged?

We are faced with a predicament. First, we do not want American armed forces committed to Nicaragua. However, one of the few ways remaining for exerting influence on the internal situation in Nicaragua is through the Contras.

The issue for the moment is whether the Contras are a flawed instrument for exerting such leverage and influence, and if they are, whether the Contras and the resistance movement in general can be reformed in the direction of a more credible instrument. I am intrigued by the thought of reforming the resistance move-

ment. But I am also cognizant of Mr. Smith's belief that such reform is impossible.

Our inability to make a decisive judgment on this question contributes to what is already a number of excruciating dilemmas underlying our debates in the Congress.

Mr. LEIKEN. But there are those right now in the UNO leadership, men such as Arturo Cruz and Alfonso Robelo, who do believe that it can be reformed, and who have been struggling to reform it, and have, in fact, created a human rights office in Costa Rica. I spoke with the human rights officials at some length and was very impressed with the seriousness of the people involved there.

Now, if that human rights office is given the political support so that they can, for example, recommend demotion or punishment of violators of human rights, that, in itself, would be an important step toward reform. We should be very skeptical and wait for the results, but there is some evidence of reform, even in the last few months.

It is not enough, but I think there are some signs that that can happen.

The CHAIRMAN. I appreciate very much the patience and time of both of you. We are now at 1 p.m., and I know you have long overstayed the time you have allocated to this.

We are grateful to both of you and to all our other witnesses.

Mr. SMITH. I appreciate the invitation.

Mr. LEIKEN. Yes, very much.

The CHAIRMAN. This hearing is adjourned.

Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 1 p.m., the committee adjourned, subject to call of the Chair.]

APPENDIX

PREPARED STATEMENT OF GEORGE P. SHULTZ

U.S. assistance to the Nicaraguan democratic resistance is an essential element in our efforts to defend Central America from aggression, to preserve recent democratic gains and to improve prospects for renewed economic growth and equitable development. It is an important stimulus to a diplomatic solution to the Central American conflict. It contributes to our defense against Soviet and Cuban military intervention in this hemisphere. Finally, it can help to restore to the Nicaraguan people their right to self-determination denied by a minority that seeks to perpetuate itself in power by force of arms and totalitarian controls.

In short, the assistance the President requested on February 25 is needed. It is legally, morally and strategically justified. And it can make a vital difference to the emergence of a democratic outcome in Nicaragua and throughout Central America.

I. WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

In talking with foreign leaders and members of Congress, I find that just about everyone agrees on what the problem is. It is that a democratic revolution has been betrayed by a violent minority willing and even eager to serve as an instrument of Soviet and Cuban strategic designs on the hemisphere, including armed aggression in the form of support for terrorism and subversion.

In 1979, Nicaraguan democrats and their sympathizers throughout the world believed that the end of the Somoza regime marked a new beginning for Nicaragua. Nicaraguans learned very quickly, however, that instead of democracy, they had fallen prey to what the Sandinistas say is "revolution by vanguard" and what the rest of us know is communist totalitarianism. The popularity of the overthrow of Somoza concealed the establishment of a new dictatorship that threatens the security of Nicaragua's neighbors and has brought the Cold War to Central America.

A. Intervention

One of the most striking characteristics of Sandinista Communism is its messianic impulse to violence. As Congress has repeatedly and formally found, Nicaragua has since 1980 been engaged in unlawful intervention, serving as the staging ground for arms shipments to guerrillas in El Salvador. Because so much attention has been focussed on this arms flow to El Salvador, which has been sustained and occasionally massive, it is less widely known that at one point or another Sandinista intervention has touched virtually the entire hemisphere.

Chart I ("Sandinista Intervention," at the rear of this statement) depicts the breadth of Nicaragua's intervention- ist activities. (It also makes clear, incidentally, that the Nicaraguan Communists are perfectly serious when they refer to their policy as one of "internationalism".) The map identifies the countries where the current Nicaraguan government has tried to export violence, by shipping arms, training guerrillas, or providing the kinds of support necessary for terrorist operations. Managua has become a gathering place for terrorists from all over the world, including Europe and the Middle East as well as Latin America.

Two aspects of this pattern of intervention are worth emphasizing.

First, the intervention is strongest against Nicaragua's immediate neighbors, but it is not limited to Central America.

Second, the pattern is politically indiscriminate. Violence and subversion has been directed against democracies and even against Contadora countries as well as against dictatorships and more traditional military regimes.

B. Militarization

The Sandinistas like to portray themselves as nationalists, but their soldiers are trained and supported in combat by thousands of Cubans and other foreigners known as "internationalists." And this is why, despite its limited size and resources, Nicaragua is able to intervene so widely in the hemisphere: It has been armed by the Soviet Union and is manned by Cubans in key sectors from training and weapons use to intelligence and counterintelligence.

The first Cuban advisors entered Managua with the Sandinistas and took up positions in Somoza's bunker less than a week after he left it. As soon as the security apparatus was in place, Soviet bloc arms began to arrive to give the Nicaraguan Communists the capacity to repress their own people and to engage in unconventional warfare against their neighbors without risk of a conventional military response.

Chart II ("Cuban and Soviet Aid to Nicaragua") depicts the militarization of Nicaragua by this combination of Soviet bloc weapons and Cuban manpower. The total of Cuban advisors has stabilized at slightly lower levels since October 1983, when the U.S. action in Grenada led the Cubans to seek a lower profile in Nicaragua. Soviet arms shipments peaked in the fall of 1984 with the delivery of HIND attack helicopters at a time when the resistance had been cut off from U.S. government assistance. The reality is clear: Managua's military capabilities are closely tied to the Soviet Union and Cuba.

Cuban military and security officers, in fact, have done everything from helping with the establishment of political control structures in the armed forces and the state security apparatus to an active combat role with sophisticated Soviet weapons systems.

II. THE RISE OF THE RESISTANCE

When Daniel Ortega spoke in Havana on February 5 to the Congress of the Cuban Communist Party, he referred to "the blood of Cuban internationalists fallen on Nicaraguan soil." Ortega was talking about Cubans killed fighting Nicaraguans inside Nicaragua.

In this fact is a bitter truth: Nicaraguans who dissent must fight more than other Nicaraguans. And they must fight a sophisticated, heavily equipped, and pervasive security apparatus designed to deny power to all but the ruling Communist vanguard. One need look no further than the fate of Solidarity in Poland over the last few years to realize the difficulty of taking on such a formidable internal security apparatus.

Chart III ("Sandinista Repression and the Growth of Armed Resistance: 1979-1985") demonstrates the growth of armed resistance in the face of the new Nicaraguan police state. The resistance responds to a long series of repressive acts, some of which are listed chronologically in the Chart. These go from the arrival of the Cubans and the establishment of the defense committees in the summer of 1979 to the start of censorship and the postponement of elections, the murder of opposition leader Jorge Salazar, and the burning of Indian villages in 1981. Catholic and Protestant church leaders were systematically attacked and the Pope was insulted. Forced conscription came next, followed by stage-managed elections, Ortega's visit to Moscow, and finally the suspension of civil rights in the fall of 1985.

By betraying their promises of pluralism, the Nicaraguan Communists have forced the citizens of Nicaragua to take up arms once again. Like Somoza, the Sandinistas don't seem to listen to anyone who isn't armed. And, like Somoza, they seek to blame outside forces for the resistance of their own people to their policies.

The Nicaraguan Communists like to say that covert U.S. support created the resistance; that their opponents are all agents of the CIA and of the heirs of Somoza. This is ridiculous. It was Sandinista repression that in 1979, 1980, and 1981 destroyed the coalition that overthrew Somoza and sparked the resistance. In 1979, 1980, and 1981, the United States was providing aid to the Government of Nicaragua, not to the resistance.

From May of 1984 until late in 1985 -- well over a year -- the United States government provided no assistance to Nicaraguan resistance forces. As indicated in Chart III, the resistance grew by 50 percent, roughly from 10 to 15 thousand, during a period when there was no U.S. government assistance.

The Sandinistas, of course, would like to create the impression that there is no viable alternative to them. Like Somoza before them, they have driven many of their opponents into exile. But these opposition groups represent a variety of political and programmatic viewpoints. They are committed to presenting those viewpoints to the Nicaraguan people in a competitive democratic process, and would do so if given the opportunity.

Adolfo Calero, Arturo Cruz, and Alfonso Robelo lead the main resistance organization, the United Nicaraguan Opposition (UNO). All three actively opposed Somoza while he was still in power. Calero was jailed by Somoza; first Robelo then Cruz became Junta members with the Sandinistas until they could no longer accept betrayal of democractic principles and of Nicaraguan national interests.

The largest guerrilla forces belong to the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN), headed by Calero since 1983. Other important resistance organizations include ARDE, built by Robelo and former Sandinista Comandante Eden Pastora, and MISURASATA and KISAN guerrillas active among the Indians of the Atlantic Coast.

Resistance fighters are overwhelmingly rural youths. Most are between 18 and 22 years old. They are fighting to defend their small plots of land, their churches, and in some cases their indigenous cultures. Some joined the resistance rather than be forced to fight for the Sandinistas against their friends and neighbors. In defending their families and communities, these young Nicaraguans are fighting for self-determination above all else.

The commanders are more likely to come from urban areas, and have more diverse occupations and backgrounds. They include both former National Guardsmen and former Sandinista fighters, but most are civilians from the very groups the Sandinistas claim to represent: peasants, small farmers, urban professionals, and students. One was a primary school teacher; another, an evangelical pastor.

Chart IV ("Background of FDN Military Leaders: Late 1985") depicts the backgrounds of the 153 most senior military leaders of the FDN as of last November. The FDN has the largest number of former military professionals, but even there less than half the commanders have prior military experience. And notice a

key fact that many have tried to hide: a full 20 per cent of the FDN leaders joined the resistance after serving in the Sandinista army, militia, or security services.

The evidence irrefutably confirms that the Nicaraguan resistance is the product of a popular, pervasive, and democratic revolt.

III. DEMOCRACY AS THE HEMISPHERIC ANSWER

Throughout these six and a half years while Nicaragua was trading one dictatorship for another, the rest of the hemisphere was making an unprecedented and historic turn towards democracy.

Chart V ("Types of Government, Latin America and the Caribbean: 1976 and 1986") illustrates the shift to democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean over the past ten years. The map on the left shows the politics of the region in 1976, while the one on the right shows the situation today.

Largely or entirely democratic and open societies are green. Dictatorships or military regimes are shown in light brown. Three countries not readily categorized as either democracies or dictatorships are colored gray.

Ten countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Honduras, Peru, and Uruguay) joined the democratic column in this last decade.

Since the fall of Duvalier in Haiti, Nicaragua is one of only five dictatorships or military regimes left in all of Latin America (the others being Chile, Cuba, Paraguay, and Suriname).

The question is sometimes asked whether any Latin American country supports our Nicaraguan policy. But isn't a better question whether any Latin American country (other than Cuba) supports Nicaragua's policies? Differences between the U.S. and our allies, to the extent they exist at all, are not over policy goals but over how to achieve them.

Nicaragua poses very complicated issues for Latin Americans, as it does for us. Latin Americans are properly concerned about the defense of sovereignty and the rejection of foreign intervention. History has focussed much of that rejection against past military interventions by the United States.

As Latin Americans, however, our neighbors also reject Cuban-Soviet intervention. And when Cuban pilots fly Soviet

helicopters, it is not the United States that is injecting the East-West conflict into Central America. It is the Soviets and that is how it is perceived in Latin America.

So Nicaragua poses a problem on two levels. The Latin American dimension they feel that they can and must deal with themselves; the Soviet dimension they believe only we are strong enough to deal with. This is a point they have made to us repeatedly. The Latin American Foreign Ministers told me when I met with them on February 10 that they agreed with us that Cuban-Soviet intervention in Nicaragua was unacceptable.

Of course, though nobody wants a second Cuba, most would oppose any direct U.S. military intervention in Nicaragua. But we are not making a case for direct U.S. military action. We are making a case for helping Nicaraguan democrats to help themselves. If our policy advances democracy, we will always have at least tacit support.

Latin American support -- indeed enthusiasm -- for democracy is evident. I would hope that by now ours is too.

IV. WHY PRESSURE IS NECESSARY

If democracy is our objective, why do we want to pressure Nicaragua? The answer is simple: We want a political solution. The Nicaraguan Communists do not. They want a political solution only if they can violate it militarily. Pressure is the one way to bring them to the bargaining table ready to bargain. Power and diplomacy must go hand in hand.

A vote for military assistance to the democratic resistance will give Contadora a <u>better</u> chance to succeed, because it will give the Sandinistas an incentive to negotiate seriously -- something they have yet to do. They did not negotiate with the Carter Administration when the United States was Nicaragua's largest supplier of aid. And they did not negotiate seriously either with us or with their neighbors when the Congress suspended all aid to the resistance two years ago. On the contrary, in the fall of 1984, instead of bringing their political opponents back into the political process through competitive elections, the Sandinistas imported assault helicopters from the Soviet Union.

Military pressure is just as essential now to convince the Sandinistas to negotiate a political solution as it was critical in convincing them to agree to the Contadora process in the first place.

The U.S. can now help the Contadora process by doing two things simultaneously:

First, the United States must support Contadora politically and diplomatically, so as to help keep the negotiating process alive for the day when the Sandinistas finally do negotiate. This support must include cooperating in the staff work needed to ensure verification of any agreement. After the Sandinistas' record in repudiating their commitments to the Organization of American States, who would trust an agreement that is not enforceable?

Second, the United States must support the Nicaraguan resistance, so as to sustain pressure on the Sandinistas to accept meaningful negotiations toward a workable Contadora agreement. Why would the Sandinistas negotiate if there were no armed resistance?

V. WHAT WE ARE ASKING

Carefully thought-out and implemented assistance to the Nicaraguan democratic resistance can make a difference. The President transmitted his proposal to you two days ago only after we had consulted widely with our friends in Central America and in the Contadora Group as well as with the members of this Committee and others in the Congress.

-- $100 million would be made available to the Nicaraguan democratic resistance by transfer from the FY 1986 Department of Defense Appropriations Act. Twenty-five percent would become available immediately, with an additional 15 percent released every 90 days through the end of September 1987, as reports are submitted to Congress.

-- $30 million of the total $100 million package would be reserved for humanitarian assistance administered by the existing Nicaraguan Humanitarian Assistance Office (including $3 million specifically earmarked for human rights programs and activities). The President would be free to use the remaining $70 million for any kind of assistance he deems appropriate, using whatever agencies he desires, subject to normal procedures for Congressional oversight. If properly led and trained, the armed resistance will be able to minimize the suffering of Nicaraguan non-combatants during military operations. The United States expects that the armed resistance will follow a code of conduct on the battlefield that will protect non-combatants and prisoners.

-- In the event of a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Central America, any remaining balance of the $100 million could be used (through the end of FY 1987) for relief,

rehabilitation and reconstruction purposes in the countries of Central America, including Nicaragua.

All current statutory conditions on involvement by intelligence agencies would be satisfied by Congressional approval of the President's request. At the same time, we are not breaking relations with the Sandinista Government. This demonstrates our willingness to keep open the lines of communication. It strengthens the possibility of a peaceful settlement. It increases everyone's ability to cooperate. And it maintains the program's operational viability.

We are thus asking for an overt vote on a program that will operate within clearly defined parameters. We see these parameters, if Congress approves the President's request, as follows:

-- U.S. policy toward Nicaragua will be based on Nicaraguan responsiveness to U.S. concerns about Soviet/Cuban ties, military buildup, support for subversion, internal repression and refusal to negotiate.

-- The United States will address these concerns through economic, political and diplomatic measures, as well as support for the resistance. In particular:

    -- we will engage in simultaneous talks with Nicaragua if Nicaragua will also engage in internal dialogue as proposed by UNO (the UNO proposal includes a cease-fire and lifting of the state of emergency);

    -- we will respond positively to other steps by the Government of Nicaragua toward meeting our concerns.

-- Any easing of U.S. pressure on Nicaragua will be implemented, after consultation with Congress, by reference to observable Nicaraguan conduct (e.g., freedom of the press, reduced arms deliveries or foreign military presence, respect for a cease-fire).

-- The U.S. actions shall be consistent with our right to defend ourselves and assist our allies for the purpose of achieving a comprehensive, verifiable Contadora agreement and democratic reconciliation in Nicaragua, without the use of force by the United States.

-- The President will report to Congress every 90 days on diplomatic efforts, human rights, and use of appropriated funds. This is the same as current reporting requirements.

I should note that the objectives reflected in these undertakings are not those of the United States alone. Each of them, including national reconciliation through dialogue with the armed opposition, are agreed objectives of the Contadora process. We are asking the Sandinistas to do no more than what they themselves have ostensibly agreed are the steps essential to a lasting peace in Central America.

VI. CONCLUSION

Either we are willing to act on a vital issue close to our shores at a critical moment when the world is watching or we are not. Either we help Nicaraguans to gain their freedom, or we do not. In Europe and in the Middle East, in Afghanistan and in Cambodia, in South America and in Southern Africa, our friends and our enemies will draw their own conclusions from what we decide.

The Sandinistas' record in dealing with Nicaraguans and other Central Americans makes clear that the resistance is the only constraint they recognize. As long as the Sandinistas are free to try to expand their revolution, the killing and misery will continue in Central America.

Only a democratic opening in Nicaragua can alter these dim prospects. And the resistance is the major element in the present equation that can help create that opening. Nicaraguans are disenchanted with the Sandinistas; more Nicaraguans are likely to join the resistance if they believe the U.S. will support the restoration of the revolution's original goals.

U.S. aid to the Nicaraguan resistance may intensify support for the Sandinistas among certain individuals who are already firmly in their camp, but we do not see the ranks of Sandinista supporters growing as a result of our backing of the resistance. On the contrary: our assistance will give heart to the vast majority of Nicaraguans who yearn for freedom.

Opposition to U.S. aid to the resistance is greatest outside Nicaragua, wherever people do not appreciate that the Sandinistas depend on violence as a political tool, or where they lack information about the extent of Sandinista abuses of human rights, or among those who do not realize that the true underdogs are the Nicaraguan people and their neighbors who are resisting violent minorities backed by military aid from Cuba and the Soviet bloc. Reactions among former Sandinista sympathizers suggest that the reality of the new tyranny in Nicaragua is being increasingly understood in Europe as well as Latin America and the United States.

The bottom line is this: absent a credible challenge to their militarized control of Nicaragua, the Sandinistas have no incentive to negotiate a lasting political solution to the conflict in Central America. The resistance can provide such a challenge -- if we help. Without military aid to the resistance, the Sandinistas will simply monopolize power and continue to destabilize their neighbors. If the Central American house remains divided against itself, prospects for democracy would ultimately be doomed in the region as a whole as well as Nicaragua.

The U.S. has both moral and strategic interests in the consolidation of democracy in this hemisphere. To the extent that we support Latin Americans who are struggling for objectives similar to ours, we reduce the likelihood of having to intervene to protect our interests and defend our allies. If there were no armed resistance, we might ultimately confront choices even more difficult than this one.

Under the expedited procedures that Congress has provided, the President is entitled to a vote on his request. A positive vote is essential to protect our strategic interests, preserve opportunities for diplomacy, and assure that the progress made in recent years in El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala will not be reversed, and that Costa Rica will maintain its democracy.

There are many uncertainties ahead in Nicaragua. We are fully aware of them. But we are also aware that there were many uncertainties in El Salvador, in Central America generally, and most recently in Haiti and the Philippines. We were right in El Salvador. Castro, and the Soviets, and the Libyans and the Nicaraguan Communists have clearly made their choice. Now it is up to us to make ours.

Sandinista Intervention

Group A: Countries where **arms** originating in Nicaragua have been found.

Group B: Countries from which guerrillas have received **military training** in Nicaragua.

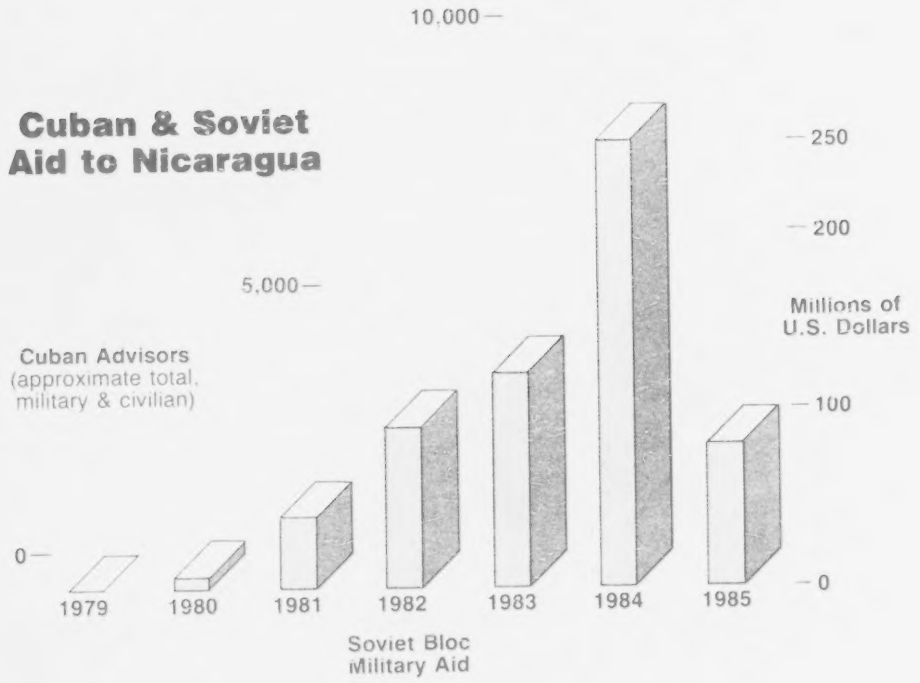
Group C: Countries in which radicals have received **other support** (such as Safe Haven, Transit, False Documentation, etc.) from Nicaragua.

Includes all of the countries in groups **A** & **B**.

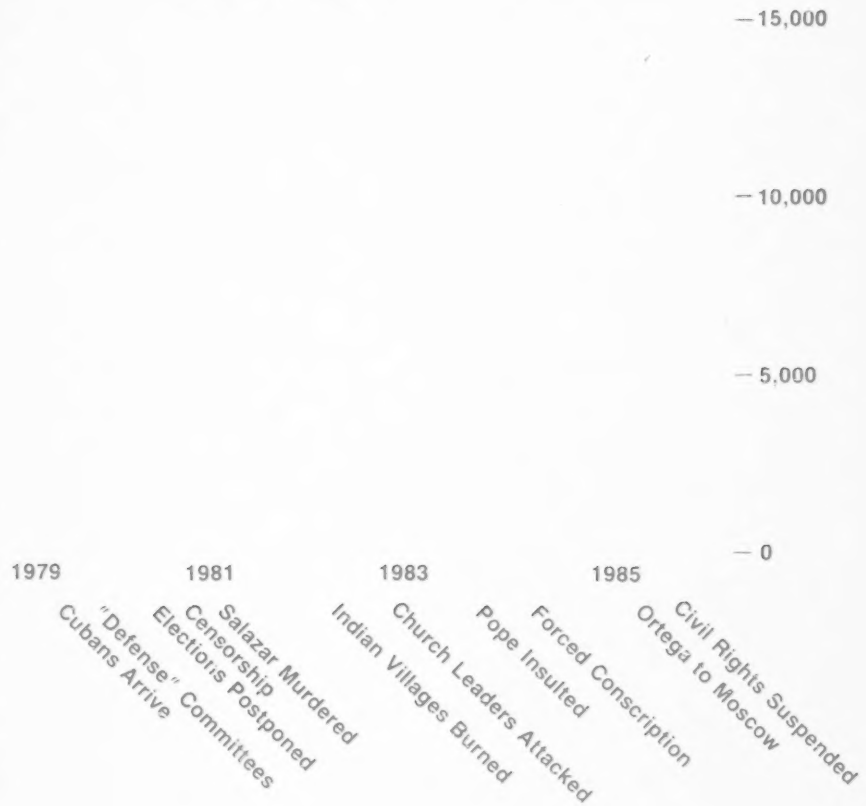
Group D: Countries not included in groups **A, B, or C**.

Note: Only independent countries are shown

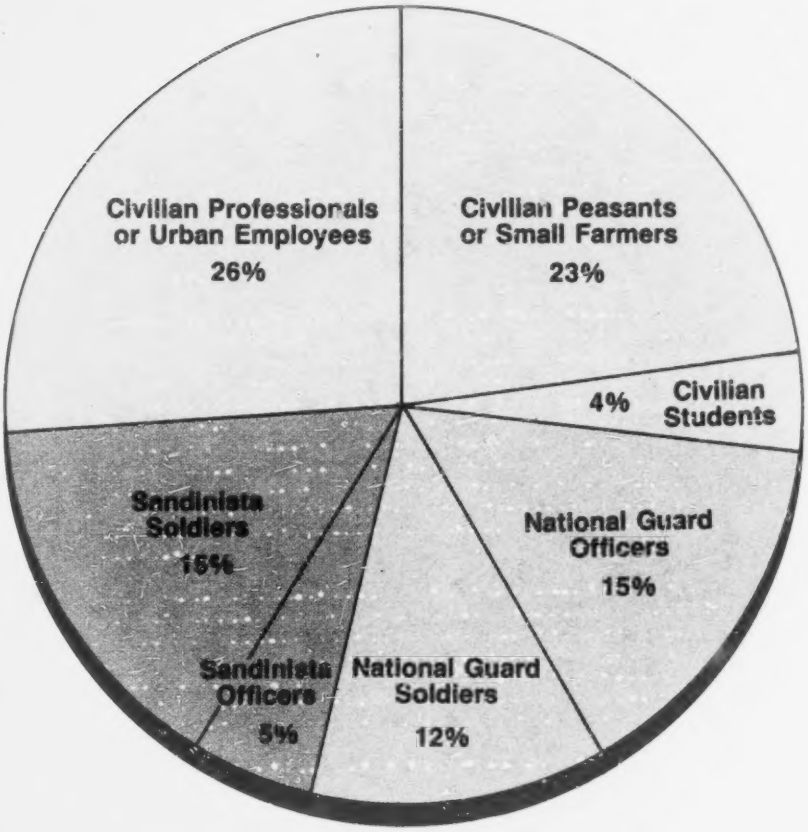
Names and boundaries are not necessarily authoritative


Cuban & Soviet
Aid to Nicaragua
10,000
5,000
0
Cuban Advisors
(approximate total,
military & civilian)
250
200
100
0
Millions of
U.S. Dollars
1979
1980
1981
1982
1983
1984
1985
Soviet Bloc
Military Aid

Sandinista Repression & the Growth of Armed Resistance: 1979 - 1985



Background of FDN Military Leaders: Late 1985



Total Civilian	**53%**
Total National Guard	**27%**
Total Sandinista	**20%**

1976
1986
Types of Government, LATIN AMERICA and The CARIBBEAN: 1976 and 1986
Largely or entirely democratic and open societies
Dictatorships or military regimes
Not categorized

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release February 25, 1986

TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES:

When the Congress approved humanitarian assistance for the Nicaraguan democratic resistance last year, it assured the survival of those fighting for democracy in Nicaragua. However, this assistance has not been sufficient to bring about changes in the policies of the communist Government of Nicaragua that would make possible a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Central America and end Nicaragua's aggression against our allies there.

Determinations

Negotiations based on the Contadora Document of Objectives of September 9, 1983, have failed to produce an agreement, and other trade and economic measures have failed to resolve the conflict. At the same time, the legislation for humanitarian assistance is about to expire. If no further action is taken, it is clear that the Nicaraguan communists will steadily intensify their efforts to crush all opposition to their tyranny, consolidating their ability to use Nicaragua, in concert with their Soviet-block patrons, as a base for further intimidating the democratic nations of Central America and spreading subversion and terrorism in our hemisphere.

In these circumstances, the laws providing for humanitarian assistance to the Nicaraguan democratic resistance permit me to request authority to provide additional assistance, and specify expedited procedures for action by the Congress on my request. I am transmitting herewith a formal request for such additional assistance. As required by law, I have consulted with the Congress in formulating this request.

Why Negotiations and Other Measures Have Failed

In reports that I transmitted to the Congress in November 1985 and February 1986, I described the continued efforts by the United States to promote a negotiated settlement in Central America and in Nicaragua based on the Contadora Document of Objectives. Our persistent efforts to achieve a peaceful solution have failed to resolve the conflict because Nicaragua has continued to reject meaningful negotiations. Communist attempts to circumvent and subvert Contadora, apparent from the beginning of the negotiating process, have left a clear trail of lost opportunities for peaceful reconciliation. In most recent months, Nicaragua has repeatedly frustrated negotiations aimed at producing a final, comprehensive Contadora treaty.

Recent Contadora meetings to discuss a comprehensive, verifiable regional agreement have been inconclusive largely due to Nicaraguan intransigence on key issues. Following two rounds of talks in October, on November 11, 1985, Nicaragua made public a letter from President Ortega to the Contadora Group and Support Group governments setting forth objections to the September 12, 1985, draft agreement tabled by the Contadora Group governments. Nicaragua argued that it could not assume the obligations of a Contadora agreement unless it reached a prior accommodation with the United States.

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On December 3, President Ortega formally requested a suspension in Contadora negotiations until May 1986, that is until after the governments to be elected in Costa Rica, Honduras, and Guatemala will have been installed. Costa Rica, Honduras, and Guatemala, however, joined 25 other OAS member states in voting for a resolution at the OAS General Assembly in Cartagena that urged continuation of the Contadora negotiations. Of all OAS members, only one member -- Nicaragua -- voted against that resolution. Subsequently, only Nicaragua refused to resume Contadora talks -- a major reason why the United Nations General Assembly failed to achieve consensus on a resolution of support for the Contadora process.

On January 12, the Foreign Ministers of the Contadora Group and Support Group, meeting at Caraballeda, Venezuela, issued a joint statement intended to revitalize the process. The Foreign Ministers of the five Central American states, including Nicaragua, signed the "Declaration of Guatemala" on January 15, endorsing the Caraballeda message. Afterwards, the Government of Nicaragua issued a press communique which, although claiming "total adherence" to the Caraballeda message, characterized the various actions suggested in the Caraballeda message as prerequisites to resumption of Contadora negotiations. This communique also reaffirmed the Nicaraguan position of November 11 objecting to the Contadora draft agreement.

On February 5, President Ortega repeated this position in his speech to the Third Cuban Communist Party Congress in Havana noting that "the peace document that the Contadora Group submitted in September 1985 is unacceptable to Nicaragua."

On February 10, Secretary of State Shultz met with the Foreign Ministers of the Contadora Group and Support Group. The Secretary welcomed the good offices of the two Contadora groups to promote national reconciliation as expressed in the Caraballeda message, and offered to resume bilateral talks with Nicaragua simultaneously with the beginning of Sandinista dialogue with the democratic resistance. Secretary Shultz also informed the Foreign Ministers that the United States was prepared to take further steps in response to changes in Nicaraguan behavior on the four key issues of concern -- support of subversion, the Cuban/Soviet presence, the military buildup, and internal repression. He pointed out that a dialogue and ceasefire would mean that cessation of the application of force and the process of national reconciliation would go forward at the same time. My Special Envoy, Ambassador Harry Shlaudeman, began consultation with the Contadora and Support Group governments the week of February 16 on this initiative.

Meanwhile, the Sandinistas have rejected a February 6 proposal from opposition political parties in Nicaragua for suspension of hostilities, an effective general amnesty law for reconciliation of all Nicaraguans, a repeal of the state of emergency, an agreement for the establishment and observance of a new electoral process, effective fulfillment of Nicaragua's commitments for democratization and international assistance in the implementation of these demands. Also, another Contadora negotiating session held February 14-15 was inconclusive because of continued Nicaraguan refusal to address the remaining issues to be resolved in the current Contadora draft agreement.

Description of Request

The request transmitted herewith asks your approval for the transfer of $100,000,000 from funds already appropriated for the Department of Defense so that those funds would also be available for assistance to the Nicaraguan democratic resistance. I am requesting this transfer authority, in lieu of a supplemental appropriation, because I regard this request as a matter of high priority for the national security of the United States. Including a proposal for additional funds in this request would have diverted attention from the basic national security issues here involved. However, the resulting reduction in the funds available for the Department of Defense, if not remedied, will inevitably impair ongoing efforts to restore and maintain the readiness of the armed forces. This impairment in defense readiness will be addressed separately.

The $100,000,000 to be made available for assistance to the Nicaraguan democratic resistance would include funds that have been appropriated to remain available for obligation beyond September 30, 1986. Obligations will be made on an incremental basis, with 25 percent available when the request is approved and an additional 15 percent to become available at 90-day intervals as reports are provided to the Congress on actions to achieve a resolution of the conflict in Central America. However, no obligations may be incurred after September 30, 1987.

Of the $100,000,000, $30,000,000 will be for a program of humanitarian assistance administered by the present Nicaraguan Humanitarian Assistance Office, including $3,000,000 exclusively for strengthening the observance and advancement of human rights. This emphasis on human rights reflects a determination that human rights must be respected. As in our support for democracy elsewhere, human rights training and assistance can be expected to achieve significant positive results.

Should a peaceful settlement of the conflict in Central America be achieved during the period these funds remain available, the remaining funds could then be used for assistance to Central American countries, including Nicaragua, for relief, rehabilitation, and reconstruction.

Approval of this request will permit me to use any department or agency in the Executive Branch, including agencies involved in intelligence activities, in carrying out programs and activities to assist the Nicaraguan democratic resistance. The statutory requirements for congressional approval of the use of such agencies, as well as statutes requiring prior authorization for the use of appropriated funds will be satisfied by the approval of my request.

Finally, the request contains a series of undertakings by me, which I am asking the Congress to accept. These undertakings, which were developed in consultations with the Congress, are intended to assure that a clear and explicit understanding exists between the Executive and Legislative Branches as to the purposes of the requested assistance to the Nicaraguan democratic resistance and United States objectives in Central America.

In particular, I am undertaking in this request:

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-- That United States policy toward Nicaragua will be based on Nicaragua's responsiveness to our well-known concerns about the Government of Nicaragua's close military and security ties to Cuba and the Soviet Union, its military buildup, its unlawful support for subversion and terrorism, its internal repression, and its refusal to negotiate in good faith with its neighbors or its own people;

-- That, in addition to support for the democratic resistance, the United States will rely on economic, political and diplomatic measures to address these concerns. In this regard, I am publicly affirming two offers that I have previously made through diplomatic channels in an effort to obtain a peaceful resolution of the conflict. First, we will engage in formal bilateral discussions with the Nicaraguan Government, to commence simultaneously with a church-mediated national dialogue in Nicaragua, as has been proposed by the United Nicaraguan Opposition. Second, we will take other positive actions in response to Nicaraguan steps toward meeting our concerns.

In determining how to implement these offers, I will consult with the Congress and will be guided by the observable behavior of the Government of Nicaragua. We will not be satisfied with expressions of intent. But we will respond to changes of behavior in areas such as freedom of the press and religion, reductions of foreign arms and military personnel, respect for a cease-fire, and cessation of support for insurgents and terrorists.

My request affirms that our actions are consistent with our right to defend ourselves and assist our allies, and are directed toward achieving peace based on the Contadora Document of Objectives and a democratic reconciliation in Nicaragua, all without the use of force by the United States. I do not intend to introduce the armed forces of the United States into combat against the Government of Nicaragua, and I affirm that I will not regard approval of my request for assistance as authorizing any such action.

The final undertaking in this request responds to the desire of the Congress to be kept informed about efforts to achieve resolution of the conflict in Central America. I am undertaking to report every ninety days on progress toward a negotiated settlement, as well as on the disbursement of assistance funds and on human rights issues. The continued availability of assistance funds will be contingent upon the receipt by the Congress of these periodic reports.

The Need For This Assistance

Since the beginning of my first Administration, there has been no foreign policy issue more directly affecting United States national interests than the conflict in Central America, for this conflict challenges not only our strategic position but the very principles upon which this Nation is founded. We can be justifiably proud of progress in the region to alleviate and ultimately eliminate the causes of that conflict. With strong support from the United States, freedom and democracy, the fundamental pillars of peace, have made dramatic gains. Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador have held free and open elections. Costa Rica continues its tradition as a vigorous democratic example. United States economic, political, and military support have strengthened the moderate center in Central America and reversed the tragic polarization on the left and right that threatened to engulf

the region in endless violence. As a result, the only president in Central America who wears a military uniform today is Daniel Ortega of Nicaragua. He presides over a repressive regime, armed to the teeth by the Soviets and Cubans, which is the most immediate threat to the progress of its neighbors.

Few now question that the rulers of Nicaragua are deeply committed communists, determined to consolidate their totalitarian communist state. Their long, documented record of brutal repression leaves no room for doubt. Nor can there be any dispute that they seek to export their ideology through terrorism and subversion to neighboring countries. Their neighbors' success in offering democracy as a viable alternative for the people of Central America is a major threat to the system they advocate. The Sandinistas have been constrained principally because they have not yet crushed opposition to their regime at home. The struggle of the Nicaraguan democratic resistance for democracy in their own homeland has provided a shield for democratic progress in other Central American countries. But the Sandinistas, with massive Soviet and Cuban military assistance, have clearly made the elimination of these freedom fighters their number one priority. If they achieve that goal, there will be no remaining obstacle to their efforts to destabilize neighboring states.

Despite this threat to peace, we do not accept that conflagration is inevitable in Central America. The path to peace is clear. The origin of the conflict in Nicaragua is the revolt of the Nicaraguan people themselves against tyranny. A church-mediated dialogue, serious negotiations between the Sandinistas and the external and internal opposition, including the democratic resistance, is the place to begin. The United States strongly supports such negotiations, and we welcome the efforts of the Latin American nations of the Contadora Group and Support Group to promote national reconciliation talks to resolve the Nicaraguan conflict. We will steadfastly support the Contadora process in its efforts to find a solution in Central America that will be the basis for lasting peace. We will also continue to look for flexibility in the Nicaraguan position and are prepared to respond with appropriate measures to encourage them to come to terms with their own people in a democratic framework.

At the same time, we can entertain no illusions that the Sandinistas will enter negotiations on steps to allow legitimate democratic dissent unless democratic forces in Nicaragua can credibly and forcefully assert their right to a voice in Nicaragua's future. The Sandinistas' record of repression of democratic opposition groups leaves little hope that they will willingly follow such a course. They will never embrace open, democratic norms unless confronted with undeniable demands from steadily growing numbers of Nicaraguans prepared to fight for liberty and for their right to participate in their country's political life.

Our experience with the Sandinistas over six and a half years points unmistakably to the need to accompany diplomatic policy with substantial pressure focused on the same objectives. Without power, diplomacy lacks leverage. The Sandinistas will not take meaningful steps toward national reconciliation until they realize that opposition to the consolidation of a Marxist-Leninist regime is too strong to be

repressed. Approval of this request will enable the United States to be in a position to provide assistance that permits the resistance to conduct sustained operations in Nicaragua and expand their area of operations. The resistance will be able to incorporate more of the thousands of volunteers waiting to join their forces but who cannot be accepted for lack of supplies. They will be able to establish a stronger presence among a larger segment of the Nicaraguan population, thus increasing the pressure on the Sandinistas to enter into dialogue with all opposition elements, and to negotiate seriously in the Contadora process.

The cause of the United States in Nicaragua, as in the rest of Central America, is the cause of freedom and ultimately, our own national security.

The Soviet Union and its satellites understand the great stakes in Nicaragua. The Soviets have already made their decision to support the Sandinistas. Cuba's Castro has already made his decision to support the Sandinistas. Libya's Qadhafi has already made his decision to support the Sandinistas saying, we support them, "...because they are fighting America at its doorstep. Nicaragua means a great thing; it means fighting America near its borders."

Congress must act decisively to prevent an outcome deeply injurious to the security of our Nation.

If the enemies of democracy thousands of miles away understand the strategic importance of Nicaragua, understand that Nicaragua offers the possibility of destabilizing all Central America, of sending a tidal wave of refugees streaming toward our southern border, and of tying down the United States and weakening our ability to meet our commitments overseas, then we Americans must understand that Nicaragua is a foreign policy question of supreme importance which goes to the heart of our country's freedom and future. With its vote, Congress will make its decision.

Those fighting for freedom in Nicaragua deserve and desperately need our help. The humanitarian assistance approved by the Congress in 1985 has proven insufficient. Cuban and Soviet military aid in the form of training and sophisticated hardware have taken their toll. If the Nicaraguan democratic resistance is to continue its struggle, and if peace, democracy, and security in this hemisphere are to be preserved, the United States must provide what is necessary to carry on the fight. If we fail to help friends in need now, then the price we will pay later will be much higher.

Your approval of the request I am transmitting to you will provide the necessary help. I urge the prompt enactment of a joint resolution expressing that approval.

RONALD REAGAN

THE WHITE HOUSE,

February 25, 1986.

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Request for Additional Authority and

Assistance for the Nicaraguan Democratic Resistance

Pursuant to the provisions of section 722(p) of the International Security and Development Cooperation Act of 1985 (P.L. 99-83) and section 106(a) of chapter V of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1985 (P.L. 99-88), I hereby request that the Congress approve additional authority and assistance for the Nicaraguan democratic resistance, as follows:

(1) That the sum of $100,000,000 appropriated by the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 1986, as contained in P.L. 99-190, shall be available for transfer by the President to appropriations available for assistance to the Nicaraguan democratic resistance and shall be available for that purpose, subject to the terms and conditions of this request.

(2) That the funds transferred under paragraph (1) will include funds that have been made available for obligation beyond September 30, 1986, as provided by law: Provided, That not more than 25 percent shall be available for obligation upon the enactment of a joint resolution approving this request, and an additional 15 percent shall become available upon submission of each report to the Congress required by paragraph (6)(E) of this request, and no obligations may be incurred after September 30, 1987.

(3) That, of the funds transferred under paragraph (1), $30,000,000 shall be available during the period of availability of those funds for continuation of a program of humanitarian assistance to be administered by the Nicaraguan Humanitarian Assistance Office established by Executive Order 12530, of which at least $3,000,000 will be used exclusively for strengthening programs and activities of the United Nicaraguan Opposition for the observance and advancement of human rights.

(4) That, notwithstanding the proviso contained in paragraph (2) of this request, in the event of a peaceful settlement of the conflict in Central America during the period that the funds transferred under paragraph (1) are available for obligation, any remaining balance of such funds shall then also be available for purposes of relief, rehabilitation, and reconstruction in Central American countries, including Nicaragua, in accordance with the authority of chapter 4 of part II of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

(5) That the approval by the Congress of this request be deemed to satisfy the requirements, terms, and conditions of section 105(a) of the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1986 (P.L. 99-169) as well as statutory requirements for the authorization of appropriations (including section 10 of P.L. 91-672, section 502 of the National Security Act of 1947, and section 8109 of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 1986), subject to --

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(A) all applicable provisions of law and established procedures relating to the oversight by the Congress of operations and departments and agencies; and

(B) the further terms and conditions specified in this request.

(6) That the approval by the Congress of this request be deemed to constitute the acceptance of the following undertakings:

(A) United States policy toward Nicaragua shall be based upon Nicaragua's responsiveness to continuing concerns by the United States and Nicaragua's neighbors about --

(i) Nicaragua's close military and security ties to Cuba, the Soviet Union, and its Warsaw Pact allies, including the presence in Nicaragua of military and security personnel from those countries;

(ii) Nicaragua's buildup of military forces in numbers disproportionate to those of its neighbors and equipped with sophisticated weapons systems and facilities designed to accommodate even more advanced equipment;

(iii) Nicaragua's unlawful support for armed subversion and terrorism directed against the democratically elected governments of other countries;

(iv) Nicaragua's internal repression and lack of opportunity for the exercise of civil and political rights that would allow the people of Nicaragua to have a meaningful voice in determining the policies of their government; and

(v) Nicaragua's refusal to negotiate in good faith for a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Central America based upon the comprehensive implementation of the September 1983 Contadora Document of Objectives and, in particular, its refusal to enter into a church-mediated national dialogue as proposed by the Nicaraguan democratic resistance on March 1, 1985.

(B) The United States will address these concerns through economic, political, and diplomatic measures, as well as through support for the Nicaraguan democratic resistance. In order to assure every opportunity for a peaceful resolution of the conflict, the United States --

(i) will engage in simultaneous bilateral discussions with the Government of Nicaragua with a view toward facilitating progress in achieving a peaceful resolution of the conflict if the Government of Nicaragua engages in a church-mediated national dialogue, as proposed by the United Nicaraguan Opposition; and

(ii) will take other positive actions in response to steps by the Government of Nicaragua toward meeting the concerns described in subparagraph (A).

(C) The duration of bilateral discussions with the Government of Nicaragua and the implementation of additional measures under subparagraph (B) shall be determined, after consultation with the Congress, by reference to Nicaragua's actions in response to the concerns described in subparagraph (A). Particular regard will be paid to whether --

(i) freedom of the press, religion, and assembly are being respected in Nicaragua;

(ii) additional arms and foreign military personnel are no longer being introduced into Nicaragua;

(iii) a cease-fire with the Nicaraguan democratic resistance is being respected; and

(iv) Nicaragua is withholding support for insurgency and terrorism in other countries.

(D) The actions by the United States in response to the concerns described in subparagraph (A), authorized by the approval of this request, are consistent with the right of the United States to defend itself and to assist its allies in accordance with international law and treaties in force. Such actions are directed to achieving a comprehensive and verifiable agreement among the countries of Central America, based upon the 1983 Contadora Document of Objectives, and internal reconciliation within Nicaragua, based upon democratic principles, without the use of force by the United States. The approval of this request shall not be construed as authorizing any member or unit of the armed forces of the United States to engage in combat against the Government of Nicaragua.

(E) The President will transmit a report to the Congress within 90 days after the date of approval of this request, and every 90 days thereafter, on actions taken to achieve a resolution of the conflict in Central America in a manner that meets the concerns described in subparagraph (A). Each such report shall include --

(i) a detailed statement of any progress made in reaching a negotiated settlement, including the willingness of the Nicaraguan democratic resistance and the Government of Nicaragua to negotiate a settlement;

(ii) a detailed accounting of the disbursements made to provide assistance with the funds made available pursuant to paragraph (1); and

(iii) a discussion of alleged human rights violations by the Nicaraguan democratic resistance and the Government of Nicaragua, including a statement of the steps taken by the Nicaraguan democratic resistance to remove from their ranks any individuals who have engaged in human rights abuses.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release February 25, 1986

FACT SHEET

SUMMARY OF PRESIDENT'S REQUEST TO CONGRESS
ON AID TO THE NICARAGUAN DEMOCRATIC RESISTANCE

Today the President is transmitting a message to the Congress which asks that legislation be passed providing the President with additional authorities to support the Nicaraguan democratic resistance. His proposal asks for these authorities and the use of funds already in the budget for the purpose of improving the chances of a democratic outcome in Nicaragua.

The President noted that he continues to seek a negotiated solution to the problems which have been created by the communist regime in Managua. The President's message reaffirms his offer to resume bilateral talks with the Sandinistas, simultaneously with the beginning of a church-mediated dialogue between the United Nicaraguan Opposition (UNO) and the Sandinistas.

The President's message urges congressional approval based on the need to defend vital U.S. national security interests and to prevent the consolidation of a Soviet-supported communist client state on the mainland of this hemisphere. The message includes reference to the massive arsenal with which the Sandinistas and Cubans are intimidating and subverting Nicaragua's democratic neighbors. It asks the Congress to provide the support needed by the Nicaraguan democratic resistance, which has continued its struggle, despite a lack of resources.

Over the past weeks, the Administration has carefully evaluated what is needed to assist the resistance to be an effective element of pressure on the Sandinistas. The Congress was widely consulted and a proposal has been developed that meets the needs of the resistance and is, at the same time, responsive to congressional concerns.

-- $100 million would be made available by transfer from the FY 1986 Department of Defense Appropriations Act for the Nicaraguan democratic resistance. Once approved by the Congress, 25% would become available immediately, with an additional 15% released every 90 days through the end of FY 1987, as reports are submitted to the Congress.

-- $30 million of the total $100 million package would be reserved for humanitarian assistance, administered by the existing Nicaraguan Humanitarian Assistance Office (NHAO) (including $3 million specifically earmarked for human rights programs and activities). The President would be free to use the remaining $70 million for any kind of assistance he deems appropriate, using whatever agencies he desires, subject to normal procedures for congressional oversight.

more

(OVER)

-- In the event of a peaceful resolution in Central America, any remaining balance of the $100 million could be used (through the end of FY 1987) for relief, rehabilitation, and reconstruction purposes, including in Nicaragua.

-- All current statutory conditions on involvement by intelligence agencies will be deemed satisfied by congressional approval of the President's request. This would allow the President to use the CIA or DOD to carry out the program.

-- Finally, approval of the request would constitute acceptance by the Congress of the following undertakings by the President:

- U.S. policy toward Nicaragua will be based on Nicaraguan responsiveness to United States Government concerns about Soviet/Cuban ties, military buildup, support for subversion, internal repression and refusal to negotiate.

- The United States will address these concerns through economic, political, and diplomatic measures, as well as support for the resistance. In particular:

  we will engage in simultaneous talks with Nicaragua, if Nicaragua will also engage in internal dialogue as proposed by UNO (the UNO proposal includes a ceasefire and lifting of the state of emergency);

  we will respond positively to other steps by the Government of Nicaragua toward meeting our concerns.

- Any easing of U.S. pressure on Nicaragua will be implemented after consultation with the Congress by reference to observable Nicaraguan conduct (e.g., freedom of press, arms deliveries, foreign military presence, respect for ceasefire).

- The U.S. actions shall be consistent with our right to defend ourselves and assist our allies, with a view to achieving a comprehensive, verifiable Contadora agreement and democratic reconciliation in Nicaragua, without the use of force by the United States.

- The President will report to the Congress every 90 days on diplomatic efforts, human rights, and the use of appropriated funds (same as current reporting requirement).

-- Under the expedited procedures that the Congress has provided, the President is entitled to a vote on a resolution expressing approval of this request. A positive vote is essential to protect our strategic interests, preserve opportunities for diplomacy, and assure that the progress made in El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala will not be reversed.

# # # #

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN R. SILBER

Our consideration of policy towards Nicaragua is bedevilled by myths and confusions. Today I am going to discuss two myths and two confusions. The first myth is that Sandinistas are idealists whom the United States drove into the arms of Cuba and the Soviet Union, and who will evolve towards democracy if we will only let them alone; the second myth is that Contras are Somocistas who wish to restore the dictatorship overthrown in 1979. The first confusion is the belief that in order to merit our support an ally must be perfect. The second is the belief that a fire poses no risk as long as it is small. These myths and confusions must be dispelled if the United States is to have a sound and effective policy in Central America.

I

The myth that the Sandinistas are basically democrats who were driven by the United States into the arms of Cuba and the Soviet Union has no evidence to support it, and much to refute it. Yet the myth endures. It is a myth manufactured by the Sandinistas themselves. They perpetuate it by a sophisticated use of public relations and in frequent appearances by Sandinista leaders on American television and op-ed pages. Foreign Minister D'Escoto and his deputy Nora Astorga, have said frequently in such forums that they were forced by military and political pressure from the United States to turn for help to the Soviet Union and Cuba, to build a huge army and

to impose repressive measures restricting every aspect of Nicaraguan life.

But the fact is that the Somoza regime fell when the United States, under President Carter, withdrew its support and encouraged the democratic forces who made the revolution. Somoza was universally despised: his regime was described to the Kissinger Commission as kleptocracy--government by theft. He stole from everyone outside his extended family--from doctors and businessmen no less than from workers and campesinos. He went well beyond the proverbial standard of stealing everything that was not nailed down: he stole much of the land of Nicaragua as well. Had Somoza managed to avoid alienating every aspect of Nicaraguan society, attracting only the opposition of the Sandinistas, he might well still be in power. When the new government came to power, it represented all segments of Nicaraguan society. Cruz, Chamorro, Robelo, Calero, Pastora and other democratic leaders were included in the original governing council along with the Sandinistas. It was this coalition government that came immediately to Washington to solicit economic support.

It found a warm welcome in Washington, and the United States appropriated $117 million--more than all U.S. aid to the rest of Central America combined--to assist it. No administration could have been more supportive of the Sandinista regime than the Carter administration in the months that followed the revolution. These facts alone discredit once

and for all the myth that the United States drove the Sandinistas into the arms of Moscow.

The record is equally clear that the Sandinista leadership were Marxist-Leninists long before the revolution. Tomas Borge, Minister of the Interior, was a communist in college. In noting that Mr. Borge was a communist twenty years before the revolution, I am not red-baiting: Borge himself uses the term to describe his position then and now. Bayardo Arce, one of the Sandinista leaders, has been quite clear about his contempt for the democratic process, having described the 1984 elections as no more than "a concession to imperialism." In this he uses standard Leninist rhetoric. Yet another example is the regime's application of the term "Contra" to those fighting to restore freedom. We should remember that "Contra" is the term the Soviets use for the freedom fighters in Afghanistan. Humberto Ortega, brother of President Ortega and Minister of Defense, has said "without Sandinismo we cannot be Marxist-Leninists, and without Marxist-Leninism, Sandinistas cannot be revolutionary, that is why both go inseparably bound together." It would be interesting to know what the staunchly anti-communist Augusto Cesar Sandino would have made of this formulation by those who have appropriated his name.

We should take Commandante Ortega and his associates at their word: they proclaim their Leninism; why should we deny it?

Leninism is irrevocably and on principle opposed to democracy. The Sandinistas are dedicated Leninists and

committed opponents of democracy. They do not, of course, admit this in so many words in statements meant for consumption outside their inner circles. They talk a good line on democracy, but they suppress it in practice. For the first five years of their regime, they resisted all demands for free elections, cynically breaking the pledge they had made June 23, 1979, to the Organization of American States. When, under massive international pressure, they finally held an election, it was a charade, failing to meet the most elementary tests of openness and fairness. From the start they have censored the press and television, harrassed free trade unions, persecuted religion, and subjected all aspects of the economy to a control that is barely distinguishable from state ownership.

Any remaining doubts about the democratic ideals of the Sandinistas should have been removed by President Ortega's proclamation of last October suspending those few civil rights left to Nicaraguans. In substance and in style, it is indistinguishable from the proclamation of February 28, 1933, by which Adolf Hitler snuffed out the guttering flame of democracy in Germany. Hitler understood which rights he had to destroy in order to consolidate his tyranny. The Sandinistas, on the evidence of their own behavior, are no less astute and no less ruthless. Indeed, Ortega's list of rights abolished is even more comprehensive than Hitler's of 1933.

Archbishop (now Cardinal) Obando y Bravo was a determined and public critic of Somoza, as one can learn from Somoza's memoirs, where he figures as one of Somoza's chief villains.

On July 11, 1984, responding to the assault on the church, Cardinal Obando y Bravo said of the Sandinista regime, "this government is totalitarian."

It is time for Americans of both parties to unite in rejecting the myth that the Sandinistas are democrats made reluctant tyrants by the United States, and will be democrats yet if we only allow them to be.

II

Equally false is the myth that the Contras are Somocistas trying to restore the old order.

To begin with, the leadership of the Unified Nicaraguan Opposition (UNO)--the political arm of the fighting forces--is impeccably anti-Somocista. Arturo Cruz is so clearly anti-Somocista as to have been the Sandinistas' ambassador to the United States and to have served on the Sandinista junta. Alfonso Robelo and Adolfo Calero both opposed Somoza before his fall, the former having spent time in Somoza's jails for his opposition.

Several of the Contra field commanders did serve in the National Guard under Somoza. Among these is Enrique Bermudez, the Contra commander-in-chief. On the other hand, it is also clear that the Sandinistas have welcomed former members of Somoza's National Guard into the Sandinista army, where they hold command positions. And the Sandinistas make extensive use of former Somocistas as coordinators of the Sandinista Defence

Committees (CDS)--the notorious Block Committees that are proven weapons in the imposition of totalitarian control. There is, however, a difference between the former National Guardsmen serving the Sandinistas and those now opposing them. The former National Guardsmen in the Contra ranks are responsible to a political leadership which is firmly democratic and fully committed to human rights and the rule of law. That is, they have chosen a cause irrefragably hostile to everything Somoza stood for. But the National Guardsmen serving the Sandinistas assist in imposing on Nicaragua a tyranny that exceeds anything Somoza tried to impose.

There is also general agreement that the rank and file of the Contras, far from being former Somocistas, are angry peasants and Indians fighting a regime they find intolerably oppressive. Moreover, the majority of Contra troops were children when Somoza fell. Their only adult memories are of Sandinismo, and by taking up arms against it they deliver a devastating verdict.

As part of the claim that the Contras are no more than Somocistas in a new guise, it is asserted that they are guilty of human rights violations--that they are no better than terrorists. But to the extent that atrocities have been committed by soldiers serving with the Contras, these are isolated violations of policy which the Contras strongly disapprove and, to the extent possible, punish, sometimes by death. The policy of the United Nicaraguan Opposition on human rights and democracy was stated plainly in the declaration of

June 12, 1985, issued from San Salvador and signed by Calero, Cruz and Robelo. Calling for free, internationally supervised elections within one year of its taking power, UNO said:

> "We will establish the foundation of democracy through the creation and application of the rule of law which assures the authority of civil society over the states; an authentic political pluralism; the holding of free elections with the right of participation of all the political groups without exceptions; the subjugation of all armed forces to civilian authority; the separation of powers; and just solutions for the demands of ethnic minorities. In sum, the rule of law will protect the inviolability of all human rights and fundamental freedoms." [Emphasis added.]

By contrast, the violation of human and civil rights by the Sandinistas, including cases of official torture and murder of civilians documented by Amnesty International, is no aberration from policy. It is the very stuff of Leninist oppression. The Sandinistas' contempt for democracy and human rights is well summed up in their suspension of rights and liberties by their decree of October 15, 1985.

It is also worth noting that the principal report alleging pervasive Contra atrocities was written by Reed Brody, a New York lawyer who was the beneficiary of considerable help from the Sandinistas themselves. A report absolving General Pinochet of human rights violations, produced by a writer working under analogous conditions, would receive little credence.

Some now argue that whatever the justice of their cause, the Contras are too few and too disorganized to win. This judgment flies in the face of history and present facts. The armed opposition to Somoza numbered only 3,000. Fidel Castro himself entered Havana with a force of 1,000. The Contra forces already number 20,000, more than six times the size of the pre-revolutionary Sandinista force.

The Contras have gained the support of an expert in these matters. Huber Matos was a key aide of Fidel Castro in the Sierra Maestra who found himself in prison when he tried to implement the democratic goals for which he had fought. Matos, who still proudly signs himself with his rebel rank of Commandante, spent six weeks in the field with the Contras, and had this to say about them:

> "I was able to confirm the support and popularity of the FDN [The Nicaraguan Democratic Front] among the local population, something I previously had only assumed. No guerrilla force can make progress if it does not have popular support. . . . Practically the whole guerrilla army [in Nicaragua] is made up of peasants; . . . The FDN has more volunteers than it can handle."
>
> "In our struggle against Batista we had been less efficient in our logistics organization, in training and military intelligence."
>
> "In almost all the areas of military activity I was able to see their clear superiority to the improvised way in which Fidel Castro used to lead our rebel army in the Sierra Maestras."

It is important, Mr. Chairman, that we not be trapped by prior conclusions and attitudes that are shaped in Managua and sold in Washington by a high-priced public relations firm. It is important that we know the facts so that we do not find ourselves behind the learning curve or behind the shifting power curve in Nicaragua.

Edward R. Sheehan, in a series of articles on the Nicaraguan situation for the Boston Globe, has written:

> "I arrived in Central America with the conventional liberal wisdom that the contras, through their past links to the Argentine colonels and the CIA, and with so many ex-Somocistas as their commanders, were a reactionary right wing force. After nearly a week with them, I modified this pre-conception. I see them now more as actors, bearing a legitimate grievance, in a terrible national tragedy and civil war. . . . The troops are an army of simple Nicaraguan peasants of no ideology save their ardent Catholicism. Some are in their early 20s, but many are much younger, boys--and girls--who have barely reached puberty. One contra is 11; he has been fighting for a year. They are an army of children. . . . My heart went with them, for I knew that in facing such massive Sandinista fire power so many of these children would be killed. . . . I consider the military contras an authentic national liberation force."

It is clear that the Contras, far from trying to restore Somocismo, are fighting to regain the democratic objectives for

which the revolution was fought. Republicans and Democrats, united in the belief that democracy should prevail everywhere, should support those fighting for democracy in Nicaragua. And when the myths I have been discussing are dispelled, we cannot fail to see that it is the Contras, not the Sandinistas, who are fighting for democracy.

III

Beyond dispelling these myths about the Sandinistas and the Contras, we must also clear up two confusions that afflict our Nicaraguan policy. The first is the belief that the United States should demand perfection of its allies, and that imperfect allies should be abandoned. The second is the belief, never stated in so many words but implicit in much that has been said about Nicaragua, that a fire that is small and can easily be put out poses no risk.

As long as a Soviet-Cuban threat persists in the region, we shall be compelled to support governments and movements independent of the Soviet Union or Cuba, even though they are not as democratic or as supportive of human rights as we would like. We face a tragic limitation on our moral choice, because we do not always have the option of choosing between unmixed good and unmixed evil. It is not merely morally acceptable, but morally obligatory, to support the lesser of two evils. It is utterly immoral to abandon people struggling imperfectly to achieve democracy, leaving them to the mercy of perfect

totalitarians. Who, for example, would now abandon the Shah in favor of the Ayatollah?

In Central America, the democrats are on the march--imperfectly, sometimes stumbling, but on the march. Since the Kissinger Commission completed its work, El Salvador has had two elections, Honduras one, and Guatemala three. The recent election for the presidency in Guatemala, the first stage of which I was privileged to observe, was fair and open by any standard.

In 1983 the Kissinger Commission found Guatemala the least fertile ground for democracy in Central America. Two years later Guatemala has a legitimately elected government that more closely approximates the democratic ideal than any country in Central America, with the exceptions of Costa Rica and Belize. We clearly underestimated the latent democratic forces that have come swiftly to the fore.

The success of democracy in Guatemala would have been impossible without the support of General Mejia and the army, both less than perfect instruments. Had we abandoned Guatemala because its leadership and institutions were deeply flawed, we would have encouraged the communist insurgents and delayed the coming of democracy. Guatemala is a perfect example of the possibilities for rapid improvement in an imperfect situation. In Guatemala, however, no powerful alien force was opposing the introduction of democracy. The ruling military government was an indigenous one, free from foreign domination. It was free to respond, and did respond, to the democratic ambitions of its

own people. Guatemala is thus a textbook example of why the United States--rejecting the counsels of perfection--should work with the most democratic forces available, however flawed. The challenge and opportunity presented us by the Contras is better understood in the light of the Guatemalan example.

IV

It is also illumined by modern history. The lessons of the 1930s for the 1980s are very clear. In 1933, Hitler presented no threat to Europe. For those who had not read Mein Kampf, it was perhaps reasonable to sit back and wait to see what Hitler might be able to accomplish. By June 1934 and the blood purge, the gangster nature of the Nazi regime was apparent, but through 1935 it was seen by many as merely Germany's misfortune. By 1936, however, when Hitler remilitarized the Rhineland, denounced the Versailles Treaty, and began openly to rearm, it was--or should have been--obvious that he now presented a threat to the peace of Europe.

If, in the spring of 1936, the British and French had intervened to drive the Wehrmacht out of the Rhineland and hold Hitler to his treaty obligations, he would have been forced into a humiliating retreat. This was the judgment of no less an authority than Hitler himself. And after such a humiliation, the army probably would have removed him. But the allies did not intervene; the fire was too small to be worth putting out. It was still too small in April, 1938, when

Hitler swallowed Austria, and in September, 1938, and March, 1939, when in two bites he devoured Czechoslovakia. By September 1, 1939, the fire was finally big enough to be worth putting out, and it took six years and tens of millions of lives to do it.

Nicaragua does not pose an immediate threat to the United States, although its neighbors are justifiably worried about its massive militarization. The Sandinista armed forces are, on a per capita basis, nearly three times the size of those of the United States. If we include the militia, Nicaragua has in proportion nearly six times as many troops as the United States. In absolute terms it has eight times as many as Guatemala, ten times as many as Honduras or Panama. In fact the Sandinista army now outnumbers the combined forces of the rest of Central America. Nicaragua alone in Central America possesses 150 main battle tanks and a dozen Mi-24 armored helicopter gunships--all supplied by the Soviet Union.

Our inattention now to the threat posed by the Sandinistas has a demoralizing effect on our democratic allies in Central America. These dire consequences are clearly stated by Eduardo Ulibarri, the distinguished editor of Costa Rica's largest newspaper, La Nacion:

> "American tolerance of a totalitarian state in Central America means no Central American government could dare contradict that state's right to exist, or support others that do. . . ."
>
> "Faced with an enemy as formidable as Soviet-backed

Nicaragua, Honduras has no choice but to follow a pragmatic course of appeasement with a totalitarian government it profoundly mistrusts.

"In the short term, Washington's policies will increase tension in countries bordering Nicaragua and reduce possibilities of democracy in Nicaragua. In the long run, however, repercussions could be worse. Reliability on the U.S. as a dependable ally will vanish among many Central American democratic sectors, while prospects for the 'Finlandization' of Costa Rica and the militarization of Honduras will increase."

We may also expect to see the destabilization of Guatemala, from which the destabilization of Mexico will almost certainly follow. And the only effective military force that will stand between Nicaragua and the Panama Canal will be the United States forces stationed in Panama.

At that point the fire, having consumed Central America, will require our urgent and costly attention.

The belief that we cannot identify a threat to our security until it has become a crisis of survival is a belief that can lead us into war. Wisdom and experience dictate that threats to our security should be recognized in their early stages, when we can deal with them as easily as one puts out a small fire. If we opt for delay, we will be left with crisis management as our only instrument of foreign policy. That is, instead of ensuring our security at the low price of supporting our democratic allies, we will be forced to defend our

interests on the battlefield. There was a time when Democrats and Republicans were united in recognizing the folly of procrastination. We must regain this bipartisan insight.

In Central America today, the fire is burning in a small corner. We are not being asked to put it out, merely to help pay the firemen. Twenty thousand Nicaraguans are now risking their lives to restore their freedom. We can help them. We should help them. We must help them.

Mr. Chairman, I testify today as a lifelong Democrat supporting a proposal of a Republican President. I see no irony or contradiction in this. The Democratic party has a long record of resisting totalitarianism. Democrats and Republicans alike can take justifiable pride that Harry Truman, in rallying the nation and the free world to resist Soviet imperialism in Greece, could do so with full bipartisan support. The Truman Doctrine was in 1946 a statement of principle supported by all Americans:

> "It must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or outside pressure."

Isolationism is not part of the historic tradition of my party. I can well remember the thrill Democrats felt when Senator Arthur Vandenberg, a Republican who had been one of the irreconcilable isolationists before the Second World War, announced that he had rethought his position on the basis of his observations, and became a forthright supporter of Harry Truman's initiatives in the rebuilding of Europe and the

defense of freedom. Senator Vandenberg's forthright and courageous change of position marked a watershed in modern history. I hope that as events unfold in Nicaragua there will come forward not one but many Democratic Vandenbergs. There have, of course, been Democrats who never wavered from the path of supporting a bipartisan foreign policy in defense of democratic peoples. The late Senator Henry Jackson was merely the best-known of these. The legacy of Vandenberg and Jackson should be our guide.

Our Democratic President, John F. Kennedy, should likewise be our guide. In his proclamation of October 23, 1962, implementing the quarantine on arms shipments to Cuba at the time of the missile crisis, President Kennedy declared:

> "The United States is determined to prevent by whatever means may be necessary, including the use of arms, the Marxist-Leninist regime in Cuba from extending, by force or threat of force, its aggressive or subversive activities to any part of this hemisphere, and to prevent in Cuba the creation or use of an externally supported military capability endangering the security of the United States."

It is an unfortunate fact of recent American history that subsequent Presidents, Democratic and Republican alike, have failed to enforce President Kennedy's declaration. For Cuba has continued to extend its Marxist-Leninist regime by force and threat of force, by aggression and subversion, in many parts of this hemisphere and now, in particular, in Nicaragua.

We cannot argue with any objectivity or realism that the Soviet presence in Cuba and the Cuban and Soviet presence in Nicaragua poses no threat to the security of the United States. The threat is not immediate and can be removed by prompt and resolute action on the part of the United States to support the democratic opposition in Nicaragua. If the Democrats in Congress do not join Republicans in Congress in support of President Reagan's efforts to carry out President Kennedy's declaration, our party will have to answer to the American people for the consequences.

The forces fighting for freedom in Nicaragua do not want American troops to do the job for them. They do want--they need and deserve--American arms and other supplies. In the past month, we have seen the fall of dictators in Haiti and the Philippines. By supporting aid for the forces of the United Nicaraguan Opposition, the Senate has the opportunity to help add Daniel Ortega and his fellow dictators to this list.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ROBERT S. LEIKEN

Thank you Mr. Chairman and the members of the Committee for your invitation to testify on the situation in Nicaragua. I am here as an independent witness in a scholarly capacity, and my views are entirely personal.

In Nicaragua the Congress is faced with a complex and challenging task, and a situation for which there are no easy answers. The wave of Sandinista repression in October of 1985 should have dispelled any remaining illusions that the Sandinistas are still a nationalist movement that responds to the needs and desires of its people. Those who would again ask us to believe Sandinistas' promises do not deserve serious attention.

But on the other hand, the forces we have been backing in Nicaragua, despite their broad support in the Nicaraguan countryside and the quiet sympathies of many urban Nicaraguans, have as yet shown little political or military effectiveness, little interest in developing a unified national movement against the Sandinistas, and little concern for democracy. Yet all of these are pre-requisites for their success in Nicaragua and on Capitol Hill.

Congress faces an excruciating dilemma. Should it approve the President's proposal for military aid to the resistance and underwrite a mainly reactionary leadership unable to gain the full support of the Nicaraguan or the American people? Or should it vote down military aid and face the inevitable consequences --

both for Nicaragua and eventually for Central America, Mexico and the United States -- of a consolidated Soviet-backed Sandinista regime? Will a stroke in time save nine? Or will we be shooting ourselves in the foot? Or is there some third way out of this dilemma?

* * * * * * * *

The Sandinistas will not, as they did last spring, make things easier for Congress. There will be no heaven-sent Ortega trip to Moscow. On the contrary, with the counsel of their international friends and patrons, the Sandinistas have launched, a major diplomatic and public relations campaign aimed at convincing domestic and international opinion that they are "David" fighting the U.S. "Goliath," and that they will be responsive and fair to their people just as soon as the gringo guns are lowered. But after the events of October 1985, there are now few people still innocent or foolish enough to believe Sandinista promises.

On October 15th Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega announced "emergency measures" that virtually suspended all Nicaraguan civil liberties including the rights of speech, assembly, personal security, freedom of the press, movement, to form labor organizations and to strike.

The decree was announced a few days after Sandinista military officials declared that they had dealt the Nicaraguan rebels "a strategic defeat." President Ortega blamed "U.S. Imperialism" and rebel "sabotage and political de-stabilization," but only a dictatorship lacking popular support chooses to fight rebellion with repression instead of rallying its people to defend their country. The real target of this latest crackdown is Nicaragua's political opposition, independent press, labor unions and above all, its religious organizations. Those who have been detained or assassinated since October have not been saboteurs or people giving assistance to the rebels but the civilian political opposition and, primarily, the clergy.

I read in a recent OP-ED piece in the New York Times that the new emergency provisions "are by no means as onerous in practice as they are on paper." (New York Times, February 14, 1986.) From February 8th to February 15th, I participated as an observer on a mission to Nicaragua of the International League for Human Rights, which will be publishing its own report shortly. There was overwhelming evidence of an ongoing and intensifying campaign of intimidation, harassment, coercion and even assassination against religious groups, opposition political parties, the independent press and trade unions. According to Monsignor Bosco Vivas, auxiliary Bishop of Managua, more than 100 Catholic lay and religious workers and fifty Catholic priests have been detained and interrogated since October 1985. Evangelical ministers and lay workers

have been subject to the same treatment. The Sandinistas have banned national televising of the Catholic Mass, shut down the Catholic radio station, suppressed the Catholic church newspaper, confiscated its printing press, seized the Church social welfare office, illegally drafted seminarians into military service, imprisoned and deported priests, prevented the establishment of a Church human rights office, prohibited open-air masses, and generally hampered the Church's capacity to teach, minister, and proselytize.

Opposition political parties and trade unions have also been the object of this campaign of fear and terror. Two Social Christian Party activists were brutally murdered in November, one after being tortured. The International League for Human Rights is in possession of a list of 57 members of PLI (Independent Liberal Party) from the town of Condega (Esteli) who are currently under detention. As usual, the Sandinistas attacks and intimidation have focused on less visible oppostion leaders, on middle and lower level activists in outlying provinces. But while selective, the campaign has been extremely broad -- virtually all political parties have felt its effect, including not only the right wing and the center, but also the Communists, Socialists, Social Christians and Social Democratic parties. In response a broad civil anti-Sandinista front is slowly beginning to emerge.

Labor unions and professional organizations like the Nicaraguan Bar Association have been subject to similar attacks,

if anything, more intense. There is no question that Nicaraguans ability to join independent trade unions and the unions' ability to organize and to defend the economic rights of Nicaraguans are under severe assault.

Lately, the Sandinistas have attempted to disguise these attacks on the civilian opposition as the response to a "destabilization plan." After talking to numerous professionals, union, party and religious leaders and activists, it became clear that there is a major Sandinista effort to infiltrate opposition groups and to coerce members into collaborating with Sandinista created "internal fronts" of the FDN. Later these activists are pressured to denounce fellow members as FDN agents, justifying repression against their organizations.

We also talked to a number of political prisoners and their families. The International League for Human Rights estimates that there are now between 3500 and 7000 political prisoners in Nicaragua, not including the 2500 National Guardsmen. It is impossible to be more precise because of the secrecy of Nicaragua's prisons and its state security apparatus. There appear to be numerous clandestine state security prisons, and it became abundantly clear that prison conditions are extremely harsh, so harsh as to border on outright torture. Political prisoners are subject to solitary confinement in totally dark subterranean cells, without sanitation facilities. They are denied food and water for as long as four days at a time. The prisoners

and their families told us that prison authorities introduce homosexuals, criminals, and tuberculosis victims into the cells of political prisoners. We also heard of cases of simulated executions, threats to family members of prisoners, including their pregnant wives, and a gamut of psychological torments known in Nicaragua as "white torture." We also spoke to individuals who had also suffered physical torture.

The human rights situation on Nicaragua's Atlantic coast deserves a Hearing of its own. Our delegation was unable to visit the Atlantic coast, but from numerous reports it is clear that the Sandinistas are waging an air war involving bombing and strafing of villages and non-combatants. I include for submission a report from the New York Times dated February 8, 1986. This eye-witness report by New York Times correspondent Steven Kinzer carried a photograph and a description of "craters made by rockets and 500-pound bombs" dropped by government planes on Indian villages. The Sandinista military pursued Miskito leader Brooklyn Rivera and several companions through a wide swath of the Atlantic Coast region. Rivera succeeded in escaping through the remarkable cooperative efforts of Miskito villagers, though several Miskitos were killed and one of his comrades, Miskito leader David Rodriguez lost his leg in a rocket attack and is now languishing in a hospital in Bogota, Colombia. Rivera's MISURASATA group receives no U.S. aid and indeed no support of any kind from the U.S. government. On the contrary, the U.S. backed FDN

(Nicaraguan Democratic Forces), generally with U.S. government and Honduran government compliance, has prevented Rivera from entering Honduras to meet with Indian refugees and leaders there. MISURASATA had engaged in several meetings with the Sandinista government in an effort to reach a peaceful settlement recognizing Indian rights. Despite their promises of peace, some form of limited regional autonomy, and reconciliation, Sandinista troops carried out this recent search and destroy operation with the full knowledge of the Sandinista government in Managua.

It should now be clear that the Sandinista leadership is not democratic, and does not respect the rights of its people or its Indian national minorities or its neighbors. The Sandinistas trust and respect only force. They have now alienated the overwhelming majority of Nicaraguans. They proved in November 1984 that they are unwilling to permit a real test of their mandate. The Sandinistas have become entirely dependent on Moscow and Havana for military and security equipment, personnel and training to maintain their grip on power.

In private conversations, both inside and outside of Nicaragua, leaders and activists from all sections of the civilian opposition indicated to me that they agreed with Comandante Bayardo Arce, who, in an off-the-record meeting with a Marxist-Leninist Socialist Party (PSN), said that "if it were not for the state of war enforced on us...elections would be absolutely inappropriate." Nicaraguan opposition members believe

that the Sandinistas are out to destroy them and that the rebels are at the very least a necessary evil. One left-of-center leader told me that if there is any chance for negotiations now with the Sandinistas, the United States would be "foolish" to remove the one instrument of pressure that has a real effect on the Sandinistas: the armed Resistance.

Most Americans and most members of Congress are now pretty clear as to who the Sandinistas are. Our difficulty is with the "instrument of pressure" designed to moderate or to remove them. The Nicaraguan armed opposition has been divided into as many as six different groups, with varying ideological orientations, political bases and military potential, such as those of Eden Pastora's ARDE and Rivera's MISURASATA. The United States has, by and large, especially in the last two years, chosen to support one of these groups -- the FDN (the Nicaraguan Democratic Force), which is now part of the umbrella organization UNO, United Nicaraguan Opposition. The FDN was created by Argentine military and security agents and by the CIA. Strong ties of loyalty, or fealty, have developed between CIA officials, acting as imperial patrons, and their colonial adjutants in the FDN. The FDN High Command, with one exception, was drawn entirely from the National Guard, and many were senior officers in it. Most of these men are intensely loyal to Commander-in-chief Enrique Bermudez, and are called "Enrique's Group", and have the allegience of some of the field commanders. However, Bermudez, together with Aldolfo Calero

who is installed as the political leader of the FDN by the CIA, and Aristides Sanchez, forms part of a cabal that is closely linked to a shadowy network of expropriated landowners, bankers and industrialists and former associates of Somoza. These exiles influence the FDN leadership through family ties or as former or current employers. FDN procurement is handled mainly by Mr. Calero and his brother and brother-in-law (Sanchez).

These leaders have been reluctant to unite with the other resistance organizations and are in turn highly distrusted by them. They have subverted efforts at democratizing the FDN and UNO apparatus, and thus have often stood in the way of the effort to create a unified, democratic national resistance to the Sandinistas. Above all, the struggle in Nicaragua is a national struggle, yet it has been dominated by a small ideological sector of pre-revolutionary Nicaragua.

This is true despite the fact that the popular base of the resistance has grown enormously. There are some 20,000 active armed insurgents in a Nicaraguan population of 3,000,000, of which the FDN makes up some 12,000. Absolutely and relative to each country's population, they outnumber the Salvadorian guerrillas. The FDN claims that 40% of its troops are former Sandinista soldiers and less than 2% are former National Guardsmen. Among the rebel groups there is much unhappiness with the current CIA-imposed leadership. Comandantes in the field often share their troop's resentment of the FDN's leadership. A former

associate of Eden Pastora has described these field commanders as "a mixed bag of Zapatas and Pancho Villas", i.e. peasant revolutionaries and rebel brigands.

Recently the FDN has suffered serious military reverses. These have been due to the intensive Soviet-Cuban training of the Sandinista forces, to their acquisition of MI-24 and MI-8 helicopters, their improvement in air mobility and communication, and to the introduction of Soviet heavy artillery into the battlefield. However, the FDN's own weaknesses have contributed to their reverses. The FDN troops are poorly trained and suffer from a lack not only of equipment but of combat officers. This itself is a reflection of the FDN's political bias. The FDN has shown little interest in recruiting educated, urban cadres who tend to have ideological and political differences with some of the FDN leadership. As a result the ratio of officers to troops in the FDN is about one to two hundred -- among the Salvadoran guerrillas (the FMLN) the ration is more like one to ten. This means that the FDN cannot break down into small squads in the face of Sandinista bombardments and artillery. It also means that the FDN has lacked the trained organizers necessary to create political and military infrastructure inside the country.

The FDN's greatest strength is in the Nicaraguan countryside. The FDN receives information and aid from local residents and enjoying substantial and growing support among Nicaragua's small farmers and campesinos. FDN is a movement with a peasant base,

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populist middle echelon officers, and a mostly reactionary leadership imposed and maintained by the United States.

The most important groups outside of UNO are BOS (Southern Opposition Bloc) led by Alfredo Cesar and Eden Pastora and MISURASATA, led by Brooklyn Rivera. The political tendencies of these groups is social democratic. They have not, however, recently enjoyed U.S. funding. Nevertheless, only the unity of these groups and the creation thereby of Southern and Atlantic coast fronts will turn the opposition into a militarily viable enterprise.

Guerrilla armies are not created overnight. The Salvadoran FMLN has been in the field for nearly fifteen years. The Vietnamese and Chinese fought for more than a decade before creating effective guerrilla armies. The American people and the U.S. Congress and the U.S. Administration should be aware that armed resistance to the Sandinistas must necessarily take the form of a protracted war.

The Nicaraguan resistance forces' disunity and their failure to develop a democratic leadership has helped to isolate internationally our Central American policy. To some extent the Administration's own policy and rhetoric have contributed to this isolation. The national and democratic potential of the Nicaraguan resistance has often been drowned in a torrent of invective. Administration invective has often managed to convey

at the same time impotent rage and hegemonic presumption. This rhetoric (and the policy blunders that accompany it) usually reflect domestic politics, while it buttresses those among the Nicaraguan civilian and armed resistance who prefer to wait passively for an imagined U.S. invasion. Our rhetoric has also offended the dignity of Latin Americans, sensitive to U.S. bullying and mired in debt to U.S. banks. Moreover, until recently, Reagan Administration commitment to "democracy" has rung hollow in view of its reluctance to criticize Pinochet's Chile or endorse sanctions again apartheid in South Africa. One can hope that the bipartisan policy which helped oust dictators in the Philippines and Haiti will open a new chapter for Nicaragua as well. If this is to be the case, the Administration must be more sensitive to Latin American diplomatic efforts and must accompany its military program for Nicaragua with a political program. Nicaragua has become the apple of discord for the Western alliance. It has also been a source and symbol of domestic discord. Only a bipartisan military and political strategy can overcome these divisions and create the conditions for a protracted resistance to Sandinista domination.

The United States needs a policy which has a political, diplomatic and organizational dimension, as well as a military one. The goals of our policy should be to promote a broad national movement for a democratic solution to the Nicaraguan crisis. This solution could come about if the Sandinista

government accepts the February 6 proposal of the six Nicaraguan political parties (ranging from the left to the center to the right) for a ceasefire, amnesty, lifting of the state of seige and a new election schedule. It could also come from direct dialogue between the Sandinistas and its armed and civilian opposition. But for any of this to happen, the United States must reform its policy. It must support the creation of a broad internal and external united front against the Sandinistas. It should encourage efforts of the political opposition from the Communist and Socialist parties on the left through the Social Democratic, Social Christian, PLI, Conservative Democratic parties in the center and the Conservative parties on the right to unite their efforts for political reform inside Nicaragua. At the same time it should support efforts to create a coalition of the resistance forces, including especially BOS and MISURASATA, which would then receive U.S. military aid. In this respect the Nicaraguan opposition must take a leaf from the Sandinistas. Only a broad unity movement with an armed component was capable of forcing out Somoza. Only a broad unity movement will force the Sandinistas to hold elections, or to negotiate or to relinquish power -- whichever they choose.

At the same time, for UNO to become an effective political, ideological, diplomatic and military force, it must reform. The Administration must abandon its special relationship with Adolfo Calero and Aristides Sanchez, allowing UNO to become a democratic

institution. Only under the leadership of true democrats can UNO-FDN become an organization capable of gaining the sympathy of all of America.

The FDN military organization must be clearly subordinate to the UNO political organization. This means that UNO must have control of all public and private funds granted to it. It must have the right, upon the recommendation of the recently created UNO Human Rights Commission, to demote officers and troops found guilty of human rights violations. While UNO need not and should not be involved in the direct day-to-day conduct of the war, it should, unlike the FDR in the Salvadoran FDR-FMLN coalition, have ultimate control over military appropriations, strategy, and general policy and organization.

Military aid to the Nicaraguan resistance forces is needed and is needed desperately. And it must be sufficient to be effective. We do not have the right to send Nicaraguan peasants as cannon-fodder for the military machine that the Soviets and the Cubans have created in Nicaragua -- a military apparatus qualitatively and quantitatively unprecedented in Central America. But if military assistance is granted and <u>at the same time</u> firm steps are taken to strengthen the social, political and ideological character of the resistance and to overcome its diplomatic isolation, the resistance stands a real chance of success -- and military assistance would be justified. But our arms and training will be useless and heartless unless the political and social character of the resistance is broadened and strengthened.

It is no secret that there is an atmosphere of bad faith between the Administration and the Congress on the Nicaraguan issue. Many Democrats have been reluctant to recognize the true situation in Nicaragua because they fear that would vindicate the President. They have preferred to assail the President because they feel he is weak on this issue. At the same time the Administration has itself often sought to exploit Nicaragua for narrow domestic gains. Last June when the President wrote a letter to Representative Dave McCurdy there was hope that this debilitating and self-destructive quarrel would end. The President promised not to "seek the military overthrow of the Sandinista government or to put in its place a government based on supporters of the old Somoza regime." He also committed himself to urge rebel leaders to investigate human rights abuses and take action to prevent further abuses. Many of us feel that the administration has not truly fulfilled these promises.

Commenting on the President's promises, House Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr. vowed that the Democrats would "hold him to his new position." Yet Congress has done nothing to require that the President's promises be fulfilled. Some Democrats argue that reforming the rebels is too difficult, but in fact they are amenable to reform, especially now. They are not a triumphalist army on the outskirts of Managua, but they are also no longer mercenaries striking from border sanctuaries. Their movement now rests on a popular rebellion, with new field commanders, more

responsive to pressure, both from within and without. In any case, Managua's recent crackdown should have demonstrated to Democrats that it will be even more difficult to reform the Sandinistas.

Do we have the will and capacity to establish and sustain a truly bipartisan Nicaraguan policy? Along with the elements I outlined earlier (the need to unify and restructure the opposition), such a policy requires a diplomatic track. The Administration must make a good faith effort to give Contadora a chance. I do not believe Contadora's efforts at achieving peace and national reconciliation will be successful without military pressure. However, the Administration should agree to delay after passage the implementation of military aid for an agreed upon period (45 to 90 days) in which Contadora and the Central American countries would attempt to reach a settlement.

We have seen in Afghanistan and in the Phillipines, that the American people are willing to support national and democratic movements in the Third World. The American people will support a national movement for democracy in Nicaragua but will not support the narrow ideological project of a sector of American and Nicaraguan society. It will support a true national resistance movement, but it will not support a proxy army.

This committee which played such an instrumental role in forging a bi-partisan democratic policy for the Philippines has the opportunity to play a similar role in Nicaragua today. That means putting aside partisan interests; demands historical imagination not moral posturing; and requires strategic thinking and political valor.

April, 1985

Robert S. Leiken

Biographical Sketch

Robert S. Leiken is a Senior Associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (CEIP) and an Adjunct Senior Fellow at the Georgetown University Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). Born in New York City, he did his undergraduate and graduate work at Harvard University and was a Harvard Travelling Fellow at Oxford University. He has taught at Harvard and MIT and has been Professor of Economic History at C.I.D.E. (Centro de Investigacion y Docencia Economica) in Mexico City and at the Graduate Economics Program at the National Agricultural University at Chapingo, Mexico. During 1981-83 he served as Director of the Soviet-Latin American Project at the Georgetown Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS).

Mr. Leiken is the editor of Central America: Anatomy of Conflict (Pergamon Press, 1984), published in conjunction with the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. He is the author of a monograph entitled Soviet Strategy in Latin America (Praeger, 1982), and has published articles in Foreign Policy, The Washington Quarterly, The New York Review of Books and The New Republic. His commentaries have appeared in the editorial pages of the New York Times, Washington Post, Miami Herald, Baltimore Sun, Los Angeles Times, Christian Science Monitor, and the International Herald Tribune. He often appears on network and cable news programs, and testifies frequently before House and Senate Committees.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF WAYNE S. SMITH

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity to appear before the Committee today.

My remarks will be brief. I have three central points to make:

(1) Present policy has failed. The Administration's efforts to solve our foreign policy problems in Nicaragua by first organizing and then supporting the contras have in fact solved nothing. Indeed, rarely has any policy failed so totally as this one. It accomplishes nothing--in fact, is counterproductive--, leaves us increasingly isolated, and leads inexorably to a situation in which we will either have to (a) admit failure and pull out, leaving a much worse situation than the one the Administration found in 1981, or (b) send in our own troops. I am not certain which in the long run would be more damaging to U.S. interests.

(2) Better alternatives are available. We could achieve all our security objectives through diplomacy, and could do more

to advance the causes of pluralism and respect for human rights--do more, that is, than through our present policy, which advances them not at all. Our best course is to get fully behind the reinvigorated Contadora process.

(2) The Administration's claims to have sought diplomatic solutions and to have supported the Contadora process are false--or, at best, deliberately misleading. How can the Administration claim to be cooperating with Contadora when it has twice refused the appeals of the Contadora foreign ministers to resume negotiations with the Sandinistas? In fact, continuing aid to the contras is in itself inconsistent with the Contadora process, as was emphasized by the eight Latin American foreign ministers who called on Secretary of State Shultz on February 10 of this year. President Reagan's insistence on asking for more aid anyway was labeled "intransigent and extreme" by Colombia's foreign minister, and a mistake by Costa Rica's president-elect.

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I will elaborate a bit on each of these three points. Before doing so, permit me to emphasize that the question before U.S. decisionmakers--and the question directly before us here today--is not whether or not we like the Sandinistas; rather, it is how to deal with them in such a way as to best advance U.S. objectives. One may rail against the Sandinistas all day, but if by sundown one has not devised an effective way of handling the foreign policy problem they pose, then one has spent wind

foolishly and ineffectively.

I. The failure of present policy. Trying to either overthrow or pressure the Sandinistas by aiding the contras is not a new policy. It began in 1981. Five years later, it has produced nothing positive. Zero. On the contrary, it has made matters worse. To see just how totally it has failed, one need only list U.S. objectives and then see if present policy has advanced them:

1.) Objective-- To reduce Soviet/Cuban influence and bring about the eventual withdrawal of all Soviet, Cuban, and other bloc military personnel.

Policy Result-- The Sandinistas, as of 1981, were already symphathetic toward Moscow and Havana. Present policy has pushed them even further in that direction. Soviet/Cuban influence has increased as the Sandinistas, to defend themselves against the contras, the mining of their harbors, the bombing of targets inside Nicaragua, etc., have turned increasingly to Moscow and Havana for help. There are certainly as many bloc military personnel in Nicaragua today as were there in 1981--probably more. The Administration itself, moreoever, claims these advisers are now becoming directly involved in combat. The Administration's evidence for this claim is flimsy, but the point is that by the Administration's own account, the presence of bloc military personnel is a growing problem, not a shrink-

ing one. Our policy, then, has not advanced this first objective.

2.) Objective-- To limit the size of the Sandinista military establishment and the nature of its armaments so that Nicaragua not be in a position to threaten its neighbors.

Policy Result-- The Sandinista military apparatus is today larger and armed with more sophisticated weaponry than was the case five or even two years ago.

3.) Objective-- To halt any support the Sandinistas may be giving to guerrilla movements in neighboring countries.

Policy Result-- The Administration claims this problem continues unabated. Secretary of State Shultz was here just the other day talking about Sandinista support not only for the guerrillas in El Salvador, but also for subversion in Colombia, Honduras, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, and several other countries. The Administration's evidence for all this is thin indeed, but again, the point is that the Administration itself, by making these claims, suggests that its policies have not solved the problem. The rest of us can only lament the fact that there is no verifiable international agreement in place which would restrain any inclinations on the part of the Sandinistas to provide such support. That might work; the Administration's approach does not.

While present policy has failed, it is instructive to

note that during the period when the Sandinistas still thought the U.S. might be interested in a negotiated solution, they did accede to our demands in this regard. When our then Ambassador in Managua, Larry Pezzullo, laid it on the line to the Sandinistas in December of 1980 and January 1981 that they had to cease arms shipments to the Salvadoran guerrillas or face the definitive termination of U.S. aid, the Sandinistas complied. The Reagan Administration itself acknowledged that they had done so. In a statement on April 2, 1981, it said it had had "no hard evidence of arms trafficking within the last few weeks, and propaganda and other support activities have been curtailed."

None of that made any difference to the Reagan Administration. It was not interested in dealing with the Sandinistas; rather, it was determined to have its contra war. So it cut off aid anyway.

4.) Objective-- To encourage pluralism and respect for civil liberties.

Policy Result-- Freedom of press, rights of opposition parties and civil liberties have all been reduced since 1981. Civil liberties have recently been suspended. In this respect also, our policy has been counterproductive. This should come as no surprise. A time-worn adage of politics is that one does not bring about internal liberalization by mounting an external threat. The results

are almost always the exact opposite. They have been in this case also.

5.) Objective-- To promote internal dialogue and national reconciliation.

Policy Result-- In early 1981, various members of the Nicaraguan opposition, men such as Adolfo Calero, Alfonso Robelo and COSEP leaders Enrique Dreyfus and Ernesto Palazio, told Ambassador Pezzullo in Managua that it would be a mistake for the U.S. to cut off economic assistance and adopt a confrontational attitude toward the Sandinistas. As Ambassador Pezzullo himself summed up the situation in early 1981:

> "We were not unaware of the radical tendencies within the Sandinista government, but it was misleading as well as damaging to our own interests to label the whole structure Marxist/Leninist and to treat it as such. There were moderate forces within it which wished to retain a democratic framework. Between the radicals and the moderates there was still, as of early 1981, a dialogue. It was very much in our interests to see that dialogue maintained. Taking an overtly hostile position against the Nicaraguan government could only excite xenophobic fears within Nicaragua, thus almost assuring that the internal dialogue would be broken off. We did, and it was."[1]

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1 SAIS Review, Summer-Fall 1983, p. 14.

In other words, the Administration's own policy was instrumental in halting the internal dialogue in 1981. The Administration was not then interested; it wanted to organize the contras and pressure the Sandinistas instead. But now, five years later, the Administration says that the purpose of aiding the contras is to force the Sandinistas to negotiate with them. Now it demands the internal dialogue which it helped to break off in 1981. Only now it would be far more difficult to resume one. It is probably impossible to begin one with the contras. The U.S. should indeed encourage dialogue and national reconciliation, but it is unrealistic to insist that the contras, whom the Sandinistas regard as traitors organized by the CIA and led by too many former Somoza National Guardsmen. (The contra military commander, Col. Enrique Bermudez, is an ex-Somoza guardsman, as are, according the the Administration's own figures, at least 27% of the other contra leaders.)

The Sandinistas would regard negotiations with the contras as tantamount to capitulation, and, indeed, one must suspect that the Administration intends them that way. President Reagan, after all, said in February of last year that our purpose is to make the Sandinistas "cry uncle." Unfortunately for the President, the contras don't have that capability.

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The above are objectives which would not require the ouster

of the Sandinista government. Increasingly, however, it has become apparent that the Administration's real purpose is precisely that: to get rid of the Sandinistas. As some Administration spokesmen have insisted: "There can be no peace in Central America with a Marxist government in Managua."

But if the contra operation has achieved none of our other objectives, much less can it achieve this one. The contras do not have the military capability to defeat the Sandinistas. From their base camps in Honduras, where most of them seem to prefer to sit it out, they cannot even harass the government in Managua. And it is, frankly, absurd to think we can buy that capability for them with $100 million in aid--or with $200 million, or even $500 million.

In short, the contras cannot win. Nor do they have the capability to force or pressure the Sandinistas to do anything. Backing them serves no useful purpose. It simply carries us further into a blind alley. Congress last summer authorized non-lethal aid to the contras, but that has accomplished nothing, so now the Administration asks for still more aid, this time including outright military support. When that also fails to crack the nut, it will ask for more, and more, until finally it is forced to admit that the contras cannot win for us. At that point, when it is too late for less extreme options, it is likely to have only two choices left: (a) to admit defeat and pull out in humiliation, leaving a much worse situation than the one it found in 1981, or (b) to send in our own troops. I leave

it to your imagination which is the most likely.

II. More promising alternatives. It need not be that way. Better alternatives are available. Indeed, with imaginative, effective diplomacy, we could almost certainly achieve all our security objectives and accomplish far more to encourage pluralism, respect for civil liberties and national reconciliation. We could, through verifiable regional agreements, prohibit the establishment of any Soviet/Cuban bases, bring about the withdrawal of all Soviet/Cuban military personnel, place limits on the size of the Sandinista military establishment, and end any support the Sandinistas may still be giving guerrilla groups in other countries.

I have attached a paper which outlines the negotiating options in full,* so I will not take up the Committee's time by saying much on the subject at this time. Suffice it to say that what the United States ought to do is to fully support the Contadora process and itself to become a direct party to the accords that would result. If it really wishes to support Contadora, the Administration must take three major steps: (a) halt support to the contras, (b) resume direct bilateral talks with the Sandinistas with a view to working out an acceptable modus vivendi with them, and (c) indicate that it would sign a protocol committing itself to respect a Contadora treaty.

*This paper was prepared in the Summer of 1985. It has not been updated, but most of its points remain valid.

III. The speciousness of Administration claims to support the Contadora process. The Reagan Administration of course maintains that is does support the Contadora process, and that it has consistently sought a diplomatic solution to our problems with Nicaragua. This is simply not true. When in August of 1982 the Sandinistas handed us a diplomatic note saying they were ready to sit down with us at any time and without any preconditions to negotiate all issues in disagreement between us, the Administration did not even bother to answer the note.

When in December of 1982, the Sandinista government announced that it would forgo the acquisition of MIG aircraft and that it hoped this step would improve the atmosphere for negotiations, the Administration did not respond, or even say it was a positive step. Rather, a few months later, it had the contras begin bombing targets in Nicaragua, secure in the knowledge that since Nicaragua had no first-line aircraft they could do so with virtual impunity.

In the Fall of 1983, when Foreign Minister D'Escoto handed to the State Department draft treaties which would have, among other things, prohibited any foreign bases and provided for the termination of any cross-border support for guerrillas, we refused even to discuss them with the Sandinistas, saying we didn't think they were sincere. Shortly thereafter, we began illegally mining Nicaraguan harbors--which President Reagan said was necessary to force the Sandinistas to halt cross-border

support for guerrillas, something on which they had already offered to sign an agreement.

And let us review the fate of some of the Administration's more recent promises to seek diplomatic solutions--promises it made to Congress last spring when it was trying to persuade the latter to approve $14 million in aid to the contras. Remember that on April 23 of last year, the President sent a letter to the Senate in which he stated his intention to resume bilateral talks with the Sandinistas. He followed up in June with a letter to Congressman McCurdy of Oklahoma in which he promised to pursue diplomatic rather than military solutions in Nicaragua. Indeed, he said, the purpose of aiding the contras was to pressure the Sandinistas to negotiate. Unless we continued that aid, he warned, "a regional settlement based on Contadora principles will continue to elude us."

But once Congress had authorized the $14 million in aid last summer, the Administration promptly forgot all its promises to pursue a negotiated solution. When in July 1985 the Contadora foreign ministers called on Washington and Managua to resume bilateral talks, the Reagan Administration flatly refused. Managua accepted. How then were we cooperating with the Contadora process?

In August of 1985, Assistant Secretary of State Elliott Abrams said it was preposterous to think we could reach an agreement with the Sandinistas and expect it to be kept. At almost the same time, Mr. Abrams assured his listeners that the

U.S. continued to back the Contadora process. One can understand why the Contadora foreign ministers were confused. How, they asked themselves, could the U.S. say it regarded a negotiated agreement as "preposterous" and still say it supported the Contadora process, given that producing a negotiated agreement was precisely the objective of that process?

Then, in an interview on January 2, Mr. Abrams declared that the United States had only two options in Nicaragua, other than surrender: It could back the contras, or it could send in its own troops. Significantly, he did not even mention a Contadora agreement as a poor third. Other observers, moreover, noted that since aiding the contras accomplishes nothing, it will almost certainly lead to the other option, i.e., of sending in our own troops.

Concerned by this increasingly aggressive and interventionist attitude on the part of the United States, the foreign ministers of the Contadora countries (Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia and Panama), plus those of the support group (Argentina, Uruguay, Peru, and Brazil) met on January 11 and 12 of this year in Caraballeda, Venezuela, and agreed on efforts to revitalize the Contadora process. They called for, among other things, the renewal of negotations, efforts toward national reconciliation, a freeze on the acquisition and distribution of new weapons, the suspension of all international military maneuvers, the reduction and eventual withdrawal of all foreign military personnel and nonaggression pacts among the five Central American states.

Two days later, the foreign ministers of the five Central American states, including Costa Rica, El Salvador and Honduras, expressed their full adherence to the Caraballeda declaration.

On February 18, the foreign ministers of the eight Caraballeda countries--the Contadora countries plus the support group--came to Washington to appeal to Secretary of State Shultz to cooperate with the revitalized Contadora effort by ceasing aid to the contras--aid which they regard as inconsistent with the Contadora process--and by resuming discussions with the Sandinistas.

Secretary of State Shultz rejected their plea. The United States, he reportedly replied, would only halt aid to the contras if the Sandinistas would begin negotiations with them immediately, something which the Sandinistas, for reasons already outlined, will not do.

Subsequently, the Administration has insinuated that its insistence that the Sandinistas negotiate with the contras is fully supported by the Caraballeda countries. It is not. The Caraballeda declaration calls for national reconciliation but leaves the arrangements for that up to the legal authorities in each country. Representatives of the Caraballeda countries say a dialogue with the contras is not a sine qua non to national reconciliation.

President Reagan also rejected the plea of the Caraballeda foreign ministers by calling for greatly increased aid for the contras. As noted above, the Foreign Minister of Colombia

labeled this action "intransigent and extreme." President-elect Arias of Costa Rica said it was a mistake and that aid to the contras would not gain President Reagan what he wants. For Costa Rica's part, it has reestablished diplomatic relations with Managua and announced its intention to try to work out differences through diplomatic dialogue. Military pressures, President-elect Arias has said, will achieve nothing.

President Cerezo of Guatemala has also denounced military measures and called instead for negotiations and for a Central American Parliament which will include Nicaragua.

The United States, then, stands increasingly isolated with its policy of aiding the contras. We have only the lukewarm support of Honduras and El Salvador, and possibly of Stroessner in Paraguay and Pinochet in Chile. Otherwise the Latin American countries disagree with our approach.

Nor is it true, as the Administration would have us believe, that a Contadora agreement has been blocked by Nicaraguan intransigence. Nicaragua, let us not forget, was the only Central American country to announce its readiness to sign the Contadora accords as they were presented in September of 1984. After Nicaragua said it would sign, the United States, Honduras, and El Salvador decided to oppose the accords. We all remember the National Security Council memo in October of 1984 which bragged of having "effectively blocked Contadora efforts to impose the second draft to the revised Contadora Act." How then were we cooperating with the Contadora effort?

Nicaragua was prepared to sign in September of 1984 because at that point the plan called for the attachment of a protocol which the United States and perhaps other interested extra-regional powers would sign, thereby committing themselves to respect the provisions of the Contadora Act. This was a *sine qua non* for Nicaragua, for if it was, in accordance with the Act, to begin to send Cuban and Soviet military personnel home, it had to be sure that the U.S. would comply also by beginning to withdraw its own military personnel from neighboring Honduras. If Nicaragua was to commit itself to reduce the size of its military establishment, it had to know that the U.S. was equally committed to call off its *contra* war against Nicaragua.

Susequently, however, the United States took the position that it would not sign a protocol. Nicaragua responded by announcing in several international fora that it could not sign an accord which did not bind the United States as well. It is a position we may not like, but it is an understandable one. Were I a Nicaraguan leader, I would take the same stance. I would not sign an accord which restricted me but left my principal adversary to do as he pleased.

Nicaragua also objected to a change in the Contadora Act--a change, that is, from September 1984--which limited rather than suspended international military maneuvers. This objection was overcome by the Caraballeda declaration, however, which went back to demanding the total suspension of military maneuvers, something the Reagan Administration, with the support bases it

has built in Honduras under an extremely loose interpretation of the will of the Congress, and the thousands of troops it shuttles in and out under the guise of maneuvers, is probably unwilling to accept.

Nicaragua has a few other minor reservations about the latest draft of the Contadora treaty, but all could be worked out through continued negotiations--and Nicaragua is prepared to negotiate, as indicated below.

Along with the four other Central American nations, Nicaragua has indicated its total adherence to the Caraballeda declaration. The position of the Nicaraguan government (and the Ambassador of Nicaragua has confirmed to me that this is his government's position) is that it is prepared to resume negotiations with us right away and prepared also to resume negotiations within the Contadora. But a Contadora agreement is not possible, the Nicaraguan government maintains, unless the United States would also commit itself to respect the provisions of such an agreement, and that would include calling off its contra war against the Sandinista government.

Significantly, the eight Latin American countries which initiated the Carabella declaration have also called on the United States to cease all aid to the contras. Continuing this aid, they have emphasized, undercuts that Contadora process. By rebuffing this overture from the Caraballeda countries and requesting still more aid for the contras, the Reagan Administration has placed itself in the position of openly

blocking progress toward a Contadora accord. It is not a position our great nation should be in.

In conclusion, the Administration's claim that it needs aid for the contras in order to pressure the Sandinistas to negotiate is straight out of Catch 22. The Sandinistas say they are ready to sit down and negotiate with us and within the Contadora. The Administration flatly refuses, but then tells the Congress it must continue aiding the contras in order to force the Sandinistas to say they are ready to negotiate--apparently so that it can refuse them all over again.

Attachment: As stated

PRINCETON
Manning's Memorial

A Witness for Peace

The Rev. Daniel Erdman '73 enlists in the opposition to Reagan's war against the Sandinistas in Nicaragua

KENNETH BOBROFF '86

Erdman with Nicaraguans returned from contra kidnapping

A FEW MONTHS ago the Rev. Daniel Erdman '73 went to a funeral in the northern Nicaraguan town of Jalapa. He was not officiating at the service, he was there as an interpreter for a group of North Americans traveling along the Nicaragua-Honduras border. The dead were two government soldiers, hometown boys, who had been killed fighting anti-Sandinista rebels. At the service, people crowded into the small church. The ones who could not fit inside, about twice as many, waited outside.

After the Mass ended, the procession, two to three hundred strong, made its way through the small town to the cemetery. There the coffins were lowered into the ground and covered first with dirt and then, as is customary in Nicaragua, with concrete. For a long time people stood around, most talking among themselves, a few chanting the usual Sandinista slogans—*viva Nicaragua libre, patria libre o morir*. When the workmen were almost finished and people were starting to wander away, an old man stepped out of the crowd and approached one of the graves. He was carrying a small bunch of wild flowers. Without a word, he stooped down and laid them next to the headstone. Then, bent and tired, he got up, turned, and walked away.

"The power of the moment took my breath away," says Erdman, recalling the incident later. "I was in tears. I knew then that I had to come back to Nicaragua and stand by people like that man until the violence is over."

Kenneth Bobroff '86, a Wilson School major from Albuquerque, New Mexico, who is concentrating in Latin American studies, was named a Rhodes Scholar this winter. His thesis is on political parties and personalities in re-emerging democracies.

The visit to Jalapa came during Erdman's second trip to Nicaragua, his first having been a brief tour in 1984. After spending three months in the country, he committed himself to supporting the Sandinista revolution. He made the decision last summer, at a moment when the Sandinistas' support in the U.S. was at an all-time low. Despite the subsequent reimposition of a state of emergency and suspension of many civil rights, Erdman still believes that the revolution is worth defending, especially when its chief attacker is the U.S. government.

It is hard to think of Daniel Erdman as the Reverend Erdman. He was ordained a Presbyterian minister more than four years ago, but he lacks the stiff, all-knowing presence that allows people to call a 33-year-old man reverend. Daniel is more appropriate, especially the way he says it, with the Spanish accent on the second syllable. He is tall, four or five inches over six feet, and skinny. He complains that the pants he bought in Managua must be stretching since they keep slipping off his hips. It may be because he had to change laundry detergent. Due to the U.S. economic boycott, Tide is hard to find in Nicaraguan stores. He looks too young to be a minister. The way he sits on the couch with his legs folded up beneath him makes him seem more like a Princeton graduate student than a Presbyterian pastor. He almost never wears black, and when he has his clerical collar, it is more often in his pocket than around his neck. He puts it on when giving press conferences about his trips to Nicaragua.

While Erdman's symbolic and emotional commitment may be to the father of the soldier he saw buried, his specific commitment is to Witness for Peace, the group he was interpreting for in Jalapa. He has agreed to spend most of this year working with the organization in Nicaragua. Witness for Peace received widespread media coverage last August, when a band of anti-Sandinista guerrillas captured one of its boats. It was traveling on the San Juan River, the Nicaragua-Costa Rica border, as part of the group's campaign opposing the Reagan Administration's sponsorship of the guerrilla war against the Nicaraguan government.

The organization refers to its unusual tactics as activist nonviolence. In addition to sending U.S. citizens to the war zones, its strategy includes investigating rebel attacks and documenting the effects of the war on the nation's civilians. Its members hope they can make the current direction of U.S. policy unattractive to American voters, and thus to Reagan and the Congress. If they fail, and the U.S. escalates its involvement, Witness for Peace plans to help stage widespread protests and civil disobedience [illegible] the U.S. The group has hinted that it might send members to areas in Nicaragua under attack by U.S. forces.

When Erdman talks about Nicaragua, he says little that is overtly religious. To him, working for salvation here on earth, whether from disease and malnutrition or terror and repression, is even more important than preaching the gospel of salvation in heaven. After graduating from Princeton with a degree in history, he taught high school for six years in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Then he decided to attend Princeton Theological Seminary, and he was ordained a minister in 1981. Upon returning to Albuquerque, he began work with the Santa Fe Presbytery's Hunger Project, an aid and education agency designed to involve local churches in combating hunger. It was his concern about hunger that was responsible for his going to Nicaragua.

"Starting with hunger was like pulling a thread on a sweater. People are not hungry because of any lack of food. There is more than enough food in the world. It is simply not distributed equitably. The reason is that it is in the interests of some people that it not be," says Erdman. "As Dom Helder Camara, a Catholic bishop in Brazil, said, 'I fed the poor and they called me a saint. I asked why they were poor, and they called me a Communist.' The primary question has become: is it possible to establish an economic democracy so that everyone has access to food, health care, and education, and still preserve political rights? Can economic democracy be achieved within a political democracy? In Nicaragua, the government declared itself to have as a basic concern the right of the majority to have a decent life. It was the government's priority on food, self-reliance, and sufficient health care for everyone that attracted my attention."

Erdman's first trip to Nicaragua was a two-week visit of the kind that is the backbone of the Witness for Peace program. Groups of about 20 people, usually church activists, travel to areas of rebel attacks to live with Nicaraguan families and bear "witness" against the war. Afterward, they return to the U.S., speak about their experiences, and campaign against covert—now overt—aid to the rebels. Most of those on the tours do not speak much Spanish, but Erdman, having grown up in Mexico as the son of Presbyterian missionaries, is fluent. He spent much of the year after his first trip speaking to church and community groups in the U.S. When he returned to Nicaragua last summer, he became part of the long-term team, the core of Witness for Peace volunteers who facilitate the short-term visits and travel around the country documenting rebel attacks. He spent ten weeks there, touring the southeastern region as well as the north. He went back again in December and plans to stay most of the year.

IN THE U.S. today, the mainstream view of the Sandinista government is that it was a promising start that didn't work out. Many think the broad-based revolution that overthrew Somoza was betrayed by radicals intent on creating a Marxist-Leninist totalitarian state. Even opponents of the Reagan policy, especially those in Congress, usually preface their criticism of aid to the rebels with a statement disclaiming support for the Sandinistas. The state of emergency declared last fall allows the government to open mail, suspends *habeas corpus* for political crimes, prohibits free assemblies without a permit, and generally restricts basic civil rights. The image the Sandinistas have in the U.S. has fallen so low that the chief argument used by opponents of U.S. support for the war is that the guerrillas we are helping are worse. Led by former National Guard Officers, so the argument goes, the rebels are little more than murderers with no more commitment to democracy than Somoza had.

Erdman shares this view of the guerrillas but not the Sandinistas. "It's apparent to people who live in Nicaragua that there are many problems, but to characterize the government there as an oppressive, dictatorial, communist regime is a complete falsehood. There's no doubt that the Sandinistas dominate the political system. But they don't dominate in a one-party system; they dominate in a system where they are the party that led the liberation from Somoza. They're still tremendously popular. The revolution wasn't for the middle class, it was for the poor. The poor majority who now have enough to eat and who now get rudimentary health care still support the Sandinistas."

> "People in the U.S. are unaware that the way the contras are putting pressure on the Sandinistas is terrorism."

Nonetheless, Nicaraguans complain loud and often. Those Erdman spoke with didn't fear the government. Rather, they criticized it freely. The two most common complaints he heard were about widespread shortages of consumer goods and the military draft. Long lines and empty shelves have accompanied government rationing. "People aren't happy. They're not happy because they have brown sugar instead of white sugar and short-grained rice instead of long-grained rice," says Erdman. The Sandinistas blame the shortages on the U.S. economic boycott. When there's no chicken, when there's no milk, when there's no toilet paper, even when there's no rain, they blame the boycott. As for forced conscription, they blame that on Ronald Reagan's war.

Last July, Erdman and a companion traveled to the village of Nueva Guinea in southeastern Nicaragua. They had heard various reports of rebel attacks on civilians. When they reached the town, they found refugees who had been displaced by guerrilla attacks coming to the village church for emergency supplies. Interviewing the campesinos, Erdman listened to them tell again and again of having to flee their farms after family members were killed or kidnapped by the "contra."

"Contra" is a word used often in Nicaragua. It is always singular and refers to the entire *contrarevolucion*, not just the armed men fighting it. In the U.S., the word is almost always plural—contras—and refers only to U.S.-supported rebels, or if you prefer, freedom fighters. Most Nicaraguans refer to the anti-government rebels as *guardias somocistas*, *bestias*, or *mercenarios*. They never call them *guerrilleros* or *muchachos*, terms of affection they reserve for the Sandinista fighters who battled Somoza during the 1970s. Eden Pastora, the former Sandinista hero who now leads a small group of rebels operating from Costa Rica, has a special name. They call him *el traidor*.

Shortly after Erdman arrived in Nueva Guinea, he went to the hospital to look for a woman who he heard had been seriously wounded in a recent contra attack. Instead, he found four people, three suffering from shrapnel wounds and a girl who had lost both legs and an eye. The girl's parents had been driving when the right front tire of their truck hit a land mine. Both were killed. They had been on their way to their son's funeral. He had been shot a few days before when he ran away from a Sandinista patrol.

Erdman's bus had driven over the same route the day before. But because of all the contra activity, the government official in the town would not allow Erdman and his friend to visit the site of the explosion without a military escort. Since accepting military escorts is contrary to Witness for Peace policy, they did not go until a few days later. Then they found a man and two young boys with an old white horse who were willing to take them. "Some escort," says Erdman. "It was probably just as safe."

Two weeks later, Erdman returned to Managua, where the boat trip down the Rio San Juan was being organized. He stayed in the capital to help with support services. Part of the group's strategy for the trip, as for any such nonviolent action, was to have as much press coverage as possible—both to protect the participants from potential harm and to have the greatest effect on U.S. public opinion. Guerrillas based in Costa Rica attacked anyway, firing several shots at the boat and forcing it ashore. The 29 volunteers and 16 journalists were held for 29 hours before being released unharmed.

(A few months earlier, guerrillas stopped the Bluefields Express, a boat that provides the only transportation between the towns of El Rama and Bluefields. The rebels took

the Nicaraguans off, robbed everyone, killed several soldiers, and burned the boat. When it was replaced with a new boat, the contras attacked it with heavy weapons. Now the boat makes its twice-weekly trips with a Coast Guard escort.)

While nobody on the trip down the San Juan was hurt, the action was not very successful from a broader perspective. It did increase the amount of attention focused on Witness for Peace, but most of it was unfavorable. They handled the media poorly. Even some opponents of the Reagan Administration's policies questioned the group's tactics, specifically the wisdom and morality of U.S. citizens going to another country to support a foreign government against their own. Witness for Peace had hoped to use the trip to focus attention on the situation in Costa Rica, but their message didn't get out.

PAUL DIX

Campesino home burned to the ground in contra attack

COSTA RICA is often cited as the democratic showcase of Latin America and, in fact, it has had a cleanly elected government for over 40 years. With the victory of President Luis Alberto Monge four years ago, however, the Reagan Administration embarked on a substantial program of weapons sales and personnel training to increase the country's military capability. From 1983 to 1984 alone, military aid quadrupled to almost $10 million. Inconveniently, the Costa Rican constitution abolished the armed forces in 1949 and the government cannot legally re-establish them. The Administration has bypassed this minor impediment by arming the national police forces, beginning with M-16s and helicopters. With the Nicaraguan Revolutionary Democratic Alliance (ARDE) using Costa Rica as a base to attack the Sandinistas, border tensions between the two governments have grown.

It was concern for this situation that led to the Witness for Peace boat trip. The volunteers say they went for three reasons: (1) to commemorate the deaths of those killed along the border, including two Costa Rican civil guards apparently shot by Sandinista troops firing across the border; (2) to call for continued international efforts to reach a negotiated settlement; and (3) to support Nicaraguan proposals for an international peacekeeping force to patrol the border. The underlying purpose of the boat trip was to draw attention to the military buildup in Costa Rica being paid for by the U.S. taxpayer.

Many of the groups opposing U.S. policy in Central America see Costa Rica being used to justify increasing U.S. forces in the region. The scenario is simple. Border tensions will continue to worsen as rebels continue to use Costa Rica as a base and as the U.S. continues to arm the Costa Rican Civil Guard. The Reagan Administration then answers an urgent request from the Costa Rican government to respond to a Nicaraguan attack. U.S. planes then strategically bomb the major Nicaraguan cities or U.S. troops invade, or perhaps both.

Erdman is especially fearful that the U.S. will invent an attack on Costa Rica to justify an attack on Nicaragua. He points to the Reagan Administration's announcement in November 1984 that Soviet MIGs were being shipped to Nicaragua. Later it was found that the ship did not have any MIGs on board. Erdman calls the whole incident a hoax, an exercise by the Pentagon in "perception management," to see whether popular opinion would tolerate an expanded U.S. combat role.

"If the Pentagon and the State Department could convince the American people that Nicaragua was threatening Costa Rica, then I think people would swallow bombing," says Erdman. "What I'm most afraid of is that somebody will convince the President that 2-3 days of strategic bombing of economic targets would get the Sandinistas out of power. It wouldn't destabilize the Sandinista regime, but it would add another dimension to the suffering Nicaraguans have gone through in the last five years. If the U.S. doesn't take seriously that the Nicaraguans will go to the hills like Sandino, then it doesn't know its history. If they really wanted to get rid of the Sandinistas, they'd have to commit U.S. troops. And even if the government were ousted from Managua, that wouldn't mean the end of it. It would mean a prolonged guerrilla war."

Erdman has an enduring interest in the military and the history of war. Although some might find that odd for a minister so deeply committed to peace, he thinks it is eminently logical. "Who was it who said military history is much too important to leave to military historians?" he says. "I have a great deal of respect for pacifists, but I have very little respect for willful ignorance of the military. Pacifists should know more about the military than anyone else. For them it's critical."

Pacifists, and those who like Erdman sympathize with pacifist methods and goals, may take part of the credit for the U.S.'s refraining thus far from invading or bombing Nicaragua. Religious groups like Witness for Peace have led the opposition to President Reagan's policy toward Nicaragua and maintained public pressure on him not to expand the U.S. role. The expected religions—peace churches like the Quakers and the Mennonites—are all well-represented in this effort, but so are mainstream Protestant churches: Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians. These are middle-class congregations. They did not march in the streets against the Vietnam War and they voted for Richard Nixon, not once but twice.

Erdman has confronted this change in the Presbyterian church. Since all Presbyterian ministers are ordained to a specific function, the Presbytery—the rough equivalent of a Catholic archdiocese—has to decide yearly if each pastor is exercising a legitimate function of the ministry. This is usually routine since most work in parishes. To go to Nicaragua to work, though,

Erdman had to get the approval of the Presbytery of Santa Fe. When he went to talk about his application, one of the officials looked in the manual classifying the function a minister could have and said, "We don't have a code for that in the book." Erdman replied, "Just call it Matthew 5:6. 'Blessed are the peacemakers.' " The Presbytery approved his request. Churches throughout New Mexico have contributed funds to help support the trip.

ERDMAN believes efforts thus far have been effective. "When I compare Nicaragua in the 1980s with Guatemala in the 1950s, and the ease with which the CIA and the State Department destroyed the Arbenz government, I have to feel the U.S. people and churches are more sophisticated than they were then. There's no way the CIA and State Department could pull off in Nicaragua today what they did in Guatemala in 1954." In this effort the churches have benefited from the effects of the Vietnam experience, but they have managed to expose the Administration's policies to fierce public debate, something that did not occur until much later in the Vietnam conflict.

Witness for Peace and other groups lobbying against contra aid suffered a serious setback last spring when Congress approved $27 million in "humanitarian" aid. By continuing to document and publicize contra attacks, the groups hope to convince the U.S. public that Reagan's policy is nothing more than state terrorism, holding the Nicaraguan people hostage until its government accepts U.S. demands. "The media's reporting doesn't portray the human costs of the war. Couched in geopolitical terms like putting pressure on the Sandinistas, or using the contras as a tool, it leaves people in the U.S. unaware that the way the contras are putting pressure on the Sandinistas is terrorism. When you talk to people whose relatives have been killed or tortured or mutilated by contras, putting pressure on the Sandinistas doesn't sound quite so grandiose anymore."

After the campesino in Jalapa laid the flowers on his son's grave and left, Erdman and the other Witness for Peace volunteers stood around talking by the side of the road. There were two Sandinista soldiers not far away, each in uniform, each with an AK-47 in one hand and an ice cream cone in the other. One of them walked over to the group. Speaking very slowly and precisely, he said, "I want to tell you, I'm ready to die defending you and we're ready to die defending our people." He kept repeating it over and over to make sure they understood. That was the day Erdman knew he would return to Nicaragua. □

RESPONSES OF SECRETARY SHULTZ AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY ABRAMS TO QUESTIONS ASKED BY SENATOR EVANS

Q. Please provide a more detailed description of the kinds and incidence of intervention in each country noted on your map outlining Sandinista intervention in Central and Latin America.

A. Arms captured or found in the countries in Group A (Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala) can be traced to Nicaragua. Since 1981, the U.S. Government has traced the serial numbers of almost 1,600 M-16 automatic rifles captured from Salvadoran guerrillas, turned in by defecting guerrillas, or noted in captured documents. Sixty percent of these weapons have been traced to shipments from the United States to Vietnam. Nicaragua has been the principal transfer point for delivering these and other weapons to the Salvadoran guerrillas.

-- As early as 1981, captured Honduran guerrillas revealed that they had received explosives from Nicaragua. Fifty of 175 weapons captured by Costa Rican police in March 1982 were traced to rifles shipped originally from the United States to Vietnam which entered Costa Rica from Nicaragua. The weapons used in the October 1985 attack on the Colombian Supreme Court also were traced to Nicaragua. In April 1985, Nicaraguan nationals were captured while attempting to supply arms to guerrillas in Honduras.

Arms from Nicaragua to both El Salvador and Guatemala have passed through Honduras. In December 1985, as a result of an automobile accident in Honduras, a Lada (Soviet-built Fiat) was discovered to have concealed compartments containing arms, radios, code books, and money destined for El Salvador.

-- Individuals from the countries in Group B (those in Group A plus Brazil, Chile, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Uruguay, and Venezuela) have received military training in Nicaragua. This training has been conducted on both an individual and group basis and has included combat against Nicaraguan resistance forces. Units of guerrillas trained in Nicaragua have been infiltrated into their own countries. Honduran guerrillas entering from Nicaragua were defeated in Olancho Province in 1983 and in El Paraiso Province in 1984. The fact that individuals receive military training in Nicaragua does not mean that they currently are engaged in guerrilla activities in their respective countries, e.g. Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Uruguay, and Venezuela. Because of that training, however, they are prepared to do so when the opportunities arise.

-- Nicaraguan authorities have provided safe-haven, transit, false documentation and other assistance to radicals from the countries of Group A and B plus Argentina, Bolivia, and Panama. In addition, Managua has become a gathering place for terrorists from all over the world, including Europe's Basque ETA and Italian Red Brigade, the Middle East's PLO and a variety of Latin American groups, including the Tupamaros and the Montoneros. Specific examples could only be discussed in a classified briefing, which we would be pleased to arrange.

Q. What would be the Administration's response if the Soviet Union and Cuba increase their involvement in Nicaragua, producing essentially a stalemate? To what level is the Administration willing to allow our involvement to escalate? What criteria are you using or would you use to determine how much assistance is appropriate in different circumstances?

A. We would evaluate the nature of such a situation if it were to occur based on our policy concerns and interests in the region.

-- The nature and extent of our response to any escalation will be guided by our determination to give democracy every possible chance to spread and mature in Central America and to defend our vital interests in the region.

-- The criteria remain the same: We will seek the level of assistance necessary to pressure the Sandinistas into engaging in a serious dialogue with all of the Nicaraguan democratic opposition and to cease intervening in the internal affairs of their democratic neighbors.

Q. How would the Administration respond in the event a popular uprising against the Nicaraguan Government starts but then begins to falter, as happened in Hungary? Is the Administration prepared to escalate U.S. involvement in such an instance? If so, to what level and at what point would the Administration be willing to commit U.S. troops?

A. The 1956 uprising in Hungary did not falter, but rather was crushed by the Soviet armed forces. The two situations are not comparable. We are determined to defend our vital interests in the region, but cannot prejudge our reaction to a hypothetical situation. Nicaragua is a very long way from the Soviet Union, and we doubt the Sandinistas' ability to put down a broad-based popular rebellion. Faced with such a movement--of which the armed resistance is an essential element--we anticipate that the Sandinistas will enter into negotiations with the opposition in an effort to save themselves. We do not contemplate the use of U.S. troops in Nicaragua.

Q. The Administration policy is in support of the UNO group, which includes the FDN armed force. Is the Administration making any attempts to work with other groups working for change within Nicaragua, such as the BOS (Opposition Block of the South), or the opposition groups? Both of these groups have contacts with the Sandinistas and thus offer the chance of a political settlement. Are you exploring this possibility?

A. -- We continue to explore all possibilities for meaningful negotiations in Nicaragua. Our policy is to support all the elements of the democratic opposition. We do not believe, however, that the Sandinistas will enter into negotiations toward national reconciliation without the pressure exerted by the armed resistance.

-- The February 6 Proposal of six opposition political parties is entirely compatible with the armed resistance's calls for dialogue, a ceasefire, and an end to the state of emergency.

-- The United Nicaraguan Opposition (UNO), an umbrella group which provides an administrative and political structure for the armed resistance is open to all democratic elements. Groups from the southern and eastern fronts have associated with UNO, so it represents more than the Nicaraguan Democratic Front (FDN).

-- The Opposition Block of the South (BOS) has not associated with UNO, but this could change in the future since UNO is pursuing talks with all democratic opposition groups in an effort to create the broadest possible united opposition front.

Reagan Bid Stirring Longstanding Labor Debate

By WILLIAM SERRIN

A longstanding dispute in the labor movement over foreign policy is breaking into the open again over President Reagan's request to Congress to use $100 million in Defense Department funds for military and other assistance to rebels seeking to overthrow the Nicaraguan Government.

Two groups reflecting a division in the labor and intellectual communities over decades are taking opposite sides on the question.

Last October at its convention, in Anaheim, Calif., the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations adopted a resolution saying "a negotiated settlement, rather than a military victory, holds the best hope" for establishing the "justice that the people of Nicaragua and El Salvador deserve."

But this left unions' presidents free to pursue whatever courses their unions chose on the military aid question.

Opposition to Contra Aid

Today a letter is to be sent from 23 labor leaders to Congress urging legislators to vote against aid to the rebels, known as contras. The letter says that while the labor leaders are "deeply concerned over the restrictions" on civil and legal rights imposed by the Nicaraguan Government, "the request by the Reagan Administration of $100 million for the contras, whether as military aid or camouflaged as 'humanitarian' aid, is counterproductive and will ultimately make matters worse" in Nicaragua.

"More money will simply mean more bloodshed," the letter says.

The letter is to be signed by Douglas A. Fraser, former president of the United Automobile Workers; Jack Sheinkman, secretary-treasurer of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union; and William W. Winpsinger, president of the International Association of Machinists. It was approved last week by the 23 leaders, who make up a group called The National Labor Committee in Support of Democracy and Human Rights in El Salvador.

Another group of labor leaders and allies, Friends of the Democratic Center in Central America, or Prodemca, is circulating a statement asking Americans to support military aid and training for the rebels.

Aid Seen as Clearly Needed

An accompanying letter says, "We believe that military aid is clearly needed, but that it must be but one element in a broader political and diplomatic strategy."

Prodemca describes itself as working in behalf of democracy in Nicaragua, El Salvador and other Central American nations.

Members of its council include Jack Joyce, president of the Bricklayers and Allied Craftsmen Union; William C. Doherty Jr., executive director of the American Institute for Free Labor Development, which is affiliated with the A.F.L.-C.I.O.; Penn Kemble, chairman of the executive committee of Coalition for a Democratic Majority; and Bayard Rustin, president of the A. Philip Randolph Institute.

Mr. Kemble said many people associated with Prodemca had opposed the old Somoza Government, but that the Sandinista Government, which overthrew the Somoza Government in 1979, had "betrayed democratic purposes" in Nicaragua.

He said those who "support democracy" in Nicaragua had no recourse but to support military aid.

Decades-Old Debate

Disagreements highlighted by the debate go back to the fierce confrontations in this country years ago over communism and have bubbled at or near the surface in recent years as the nation has focused on Central America.

On one hand are unionists like those who have joined the National Labor Committee, which has extended its concerns from El Salvador to Nicaragua and other Central American countries, and which often opposes United States policy abroad.

These unionists say poverty and repression are the sources of much of the world's instability. They say the United States often places excessive importance on Communism and this has meant the nation has often been allied with authoritarian regimes abroad.

They say labor, long strongly anti-communist, has often allied itself with government and corporate leaders to combat Communism abroad.

Often these corporate leaders have antiunion records here, these unionists say. Often, they say, foreign authoritarian regimes have become low-wage havens for the transfer of United States work and this has added to problems of closed factories and unemployment in the United States.

The other side, which includes such groups as Prodemca and foreign policy institutions associated with the A.F.L.-C.I.O., sees the Communist movement and other radical groups as sources of world instability and often as the dominant force of instability in nations in Central America, Africa and Asia.

They say labor, by joining with like-minded forces in government and business, can oppose radical movements abroad and, in so doing, best serve workers and unions abroad and workers and unions here. They often seek to promote formation of centrist unions abroad as bulwarks against unrest.

They say that the labor movement must join with others in combating totalitarianism and, if this brings world tensions, that is unavoidable.

Lane Kirkland, the A.F.L.-C.I.O. president, has not taken a public position on military aid to the contras. Mr. Kirkland is president of the American Institute for Free Labor Development, whose executive director, Mr. Doherty, is a Prodemca member.

Three union presidents who belong to the National Labor Committee, which opposes aid to the contras, Mr. Winpsinger, Owen Bieber, president of the United Automobile Workers, and William H. Bywater, president of the International Union of Electrical Workers, serve on the institute's board.

Murray Seeger, A.F.L.-C.I.O. director of information, said the federation has not taken a position for or against military aid to the contras.

(From The New York Times, March 4, 1986)

THE NEW YORK TIMES Saturday February 8, 1986 page 2

In Nicaragua Town, the War Intrudes

By STEPHEN KINZER
Special to The New York Times

LAYASIKSA, Nicaragua, Feb. 4 — The continuing war between Nicaraguan Government forces and Miskito Indian rebels has transformed this once-tranquil Indian village into a battleground.

Craters made by rockets and 500-pound bombs dropped last month pockmark the swampy areas that ring Layasiksa, which is in remote northern Nicaragua. Government troops, accompanied by a dog trained to follow human scents, arrived a few days ago and have encamped here.

Villagers said they suspected the Government bombing might have been aimed at a group of Indian rebels led by Brooklyn Rivera, the most prominent Miskito leader. Mr. Rivera was said to have passed by here shortly before the bombing.

Mr. Rivera is believed to be traveling with several foreigners, including Russell Means, an American Indian activist who has expressed support for Miskito rebels.

Visit to Indian Areas

Associates of Mr. Rivera said he made the trip into Nicaragua in order to visit Indian areas and discuss the military and political situation with other Miskitos.

Sandinista authorities said the bombing raids around Layasiksa, which are similar to those recently carried out in at least two other nearby villages, were not necessarily aimed at Mr. Rivera.

"There are some Miskitos who do not want peace and dialogue, and they are enemies of the people," said Lieut. Francisco Morales, who is based in Puerto Cabezas, 40 miles northeast of here.

Talks between Mr. Rivera and Sandinista leaders broke down last May. He has continued to back Indian groups rebelling against the Government, but he says he is fighting for Indian rights, not to overthrow the Nicaraguan Government. The ouster of the Sandinistas is the announced goal of Honduran-based rebels who are backed by the United States.

Truce Said to Be at Risk

Several bands of Miskito rebels have been observing a cease-fire for several months, but the leader of the largest such group said in an interview that recent Government actions endangered the truce.

"The bombing is a serious violation of our agreement," said Reynaldo Reyes, a Miskito chieftain who said he commanded 400 men. "If there are other cases like this, or if they refuse to withdraw the troops from places like Layasiksa, there could be problems with the cease-fire."

Mr. Reyes, wearing a large pistol tucked into the front of his camouflage pants and surrounded by Indian bodyguards, was in Puerto Cabezas this week under a safe-conduct pass guaranteed by Subcommander José González, the ranking Sandinista military officer in the region. The two men have held several negotiating sessions to seek ways to begin pacifying the region.

"We have asked González to pull his soldiers out of the villages," Mr. Reyes said, "but we haven't seen any steps yet."

Bombing Site Toured

Today, a group of church and relief workers was flown to Layasiksa in a military helicopter to view the results of the bombing. Several of the visitors said they had heard reports that large areas of the town had been destroyed.

"It doesn't look as bad as the rumors suggested," said Bishop Hedley Wilson, spiritual leader of the Moravian Church in Nicaragua, which has many Miskito members. The Bishop said he hoped the Government would halt all bombing in and around villages because "these people aren't armed and they aren't actually involved in any conflict."

Villagers said neither Mr. Rivera nor any members of his group had been seen in Layasiksa. But they said they believed at least part of the group had passed nearby.

Their belief was strengthened on Monday evening, when an Indian walking across the tropical savannah outside town came across an abandoned knapsack and other items, including a letter signed by Mr. Rivera. Among the items found was a notebook that appeared to be a diary kept by Bob Martin of Albuquerque, N.M., who is believed to be accompanying the Rivera group as an observer.

Warning of an Attack

The diary's last entry was dated Jan. 30.

"Word this morning," it reads, "is that there is some kind of Sandinista mobilization along the coast here, that the Government has learned our approximate location and is moving to seal off our route of escape."

According to residents, two planes and a helicopter attacked the area near Layasiksa on Jan. 21. They said several homes were damaged and one civilian, a 14-year-old boy, died from shrapnel wounds.

That evening, the town's 75 families fled into the bush, afraid of more bombing. Most have returned, but residents said 12 families were still missing.

Relief workers said bombs had recently been dropped near the Miskito villages of Lapan and Kukalaya. They said that Kukalaya was still abandoned and that a delegation sponsored by the International Committee of the Red Cross would set out looking for the village's people this week to tell them it was safe to return home.

"Brooklyn Rivera's position is that Sandinista troops should be posted only in the larger towns like Puerto Cabezas, not in the indigenous villages, and I think that's reasonable and logical," said Mateo Collins, local director of the Protestant Committee for Aid and Development, one of the service agencies most active in Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast area.

Mistakes Acknowledged

"The people reject the troops," he said. "Many people believe nothing good can come from the Sandinistas."

Government officials have acknowledged making serious mistakes in their treatment of Miskitos and other residents of the coast region. But they say that because an armed conflict is under way in the region, their soldiers must be able to move freely and camp where they see fit.

Mr. Means said in November that he was planning to bring North American Indians to fight alongside Miskito rebels in Nicaragua. On his trip into the Atlantic region with Mr. Rivera, he was accompanied by Clem Chartier, a Canadian Indian leader, and Hank Adams, an Indian activist from Olympia, Wash.

In many ways, Layasiksa is typical of the Indian villages that dot the coastline and riverbanks of eastern Nicaragua. Palm trees shade wood-frame houses that are supported by stilts to protect against intruding animals. Many residents spend their days fishing, gathering fruit or tending small vegetable patches. Most speak only the Miskito language.

"This town has been peaceful forever," said one villager, Florentino Pantin, as he gazed at a bomb crater as big as his house. "Now there is only trouble."

Rebel Leader Reported Safe

Special to The New York Times

MANAGUA, Nicaragua, Feb. 7 — Brooklyn Rivera and a group of his Miskito Indian supporters, accompanied by at least four foreigners, are safe at a refuge outside Nicaragua, a source close to Mr. Rivera said today.

The group was said to be resting, and several members were reported to be recovering from wounds. They had been on a clandestine trip inside Nicaragua, but the trip was interrupted when Sandinistas apparently located and began to pursue them.

The group had been out of radio contact with Miskito command posts for more than a week.

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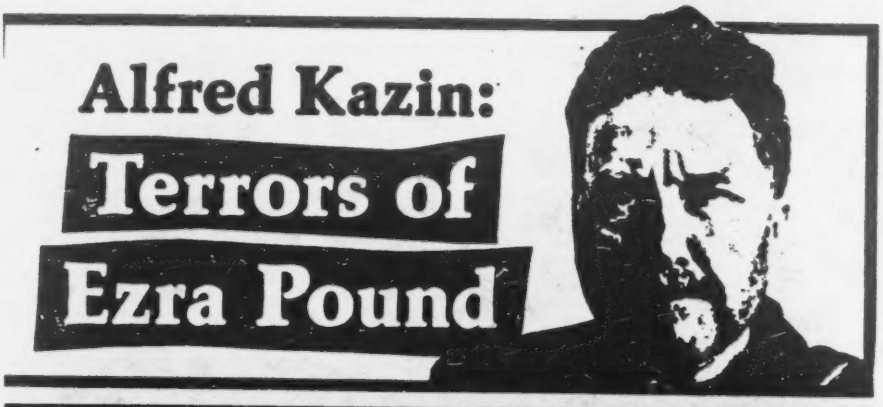

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Tangled Nicaragua

By Robert Leiken

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The Battle for Nicaragua

Robert S. Leiken

1.

The elections of November 1984 were a turning point both for the Sandinista regime and for its opponents. As I described in a previous article,[1] the election of President Daniel Ortega took place without the participation of the principal opposition coalition – the Coordinadora group – led by Arturo Cruz, who said that the government would not allow his group the minimum conditions necessary for a fair campaign. Notwithstanding the judgment of some observers that the vote was "a step toward democracy," the Sandinistas soon tightened their control over civilian life – abetted, as in the past, by the tactics of the Reagan administration.

On the evening of November 6, while the votes were being counted both in Managua and the US, the administration circulated intelligence reports suggesting that a Soviet freighter might be delivering MiG-21 fighters to Nicaragua. The administration used the scare to persuade members of Congress to support direct military action if MiGs appeared in Nicaragua. In fact none were delivered. The US sent a reconnaissance plane whose sonic booms were heard twice in Managua. The Sandinistas, predicting an imminent invasion, as they had eight times before, took the occasion to militarize the country further and impose harsher controls. (The shipment in question was of one of two delivering a total of six Soviet Mi-24 combat helicopters. What's new about it was that it was the first to come in a Soviet freighter and directly from a Soviet port.)

The invasion scare was over in a few days. But throughout November and December, activists from the opposition parties and groups were harrassed and jailed often for brief periods – including followers of the Social Christian party, the Independent Liberal party led by Virgilio Godoy, and several union leaders. Press censorship became more severe and dozens of opposition leaders were denied exit visas. Small merchants found themselves in increasing difficulty with the government, and demonstrations against the draft were suppressed. The attacks from rebel forces based in Honduras and Nicaragua became much more intense, and more of the countryside became embroiled in a civil war backed by the superpowers. A report from Managua in the London Sunday *Times* of January 13, 1985 noted that rebel

> attacks are getting to the point where the government, instead of publicizing the killings [by the rebels], as it used to, appears to have decided that fear of demoralization overcomes the value of publicity.

. . . the elections, the number of people illegally leaving the country sharply increased. In early 1985, the Costa Rican minister of public security announced that in three days, three thousand Nicaraguan youths had entered his country. "Before the refugees were campesinos – but now we're getting young people from the city."

Many of them were escaping the draft, which was imposed on young men over fifteen in 1983 and became an acute issue throughout the country in 1984. According to that year's annual report of the OAS's Inter-American Human Rights Commission: "Of-many atrocities young people who are ineligible under the very terms of the law that created the service are drafted into it." The Nicaraguan Permanent Commission on Human Rights, an independent organization which has been strongly critical of the Sandinistas, reported that in November 1984, just after the elections, an estimated three thousand young people in Chinandega were taken from their homes in handcuffs during a forced recruitment drive. After the draft was imposed, school attendance fell as much as 75 percent in some regions, and young Nicaraguans have told journalists that they are afraid to ride public vehicles or go to the movies because of the fear of draft roundups. In March 1985 an ABC television report estimated from excessive interviews that 35 percent of the eligible Nicaraguans were evading the draft and 20 percent of those conscripted later deserted.

During the last months of 1984 there were at least six large street demonstrations against the draft. According to *The Washington Post* (November 19, 1985), on December 28 residents of Nagarote, a cotton town twenty-five miles northwest of Managua, set up barricades and fought Sandinista soldiers who were rounding up local young men for army service. The soldiers were directed by local CDS (Sandinista Defense Committees, neighborhood block committees) officials and accompanied by turbas (mobs) wielding clubs and sticks. The previous week two hundred women, the mothers of soldiers, had forced their way into an army training camp in San Rafael del Sur to protest the drafting of their sons and demand their release. In May a group of Creoles and Indians on the Atlantic Coast who had been recruited into the Sandinista army revolted during a battle with Miskito Indian guerrillas and liberated Miskitos from an army prison. Twenty-two rebels and Sandinista troops were reported to have died in the mutiny.

By 1985 the government was devoting nearly half of its resources to the war. Its foreign debt was more than $4 billion; and Nicaragua became the first developing country to fall more than six months behind in the payments of its debt to the World Bank. As in El Salvador, the war has placed a huge burden on Nicaragua's economy and has impaired the government's ability to improve the standard of living of peasants and workers. The embargo on trade announced by the US last spring imposed dire hardships on the Nicaraguans and strengthened the hard-liners among the Sandinistas. So have the efforts by the US to block Nicaraguan loans from the Inter-American Development Bank – a policy that many Latin American governments have objected to.

But the economic recession had been worsening since the end of 1981, before the war with the rebels became a major factor, and after the US and other Western governments contributed $1.6 billion in aid to the Nicaraguan government. The middle class, alarmed by politically motivated expropriations, became reluctant to invest. State companies, in which there were widespread mismanagement and corruption, failed to take up the slack. By the end of 1981 real wages were sharply falling and unemployment was rising. Peasants, unable to sell on the private market and unwilling to sell at state-imposed, artificially low prices, cut back on production. By 1983, this caused nationwide food shortages, a vast black market, and high inflation. Many Nicaraguans quit their farming and factory jobs to engage in speculation, buying and selling black market goods. In 1984, a dozen new shantytowns sprang up around Managua, inhabited by campesinos and urban poor unable to pay rent.

Describing the economic situation as "hellish," Daniel Ortega announced in February 1985 an austerity plan that sharply reversed Sandinista economic policies and outlined the terms of government intervention in the economy.[2] The new economic policy devalued the currency, removed price subsidies, cut state spending and state employment, restricted the property of state farms, increased taxes, and intensified the campaign against "speculators."

As their standard of living fell to approximately the same low levels that had prevailed during the early 1960s, Nicaraguans heard from the government hardly of widespread graft by Sandinista officials. During the winter of 1984 and 1985, many of the public clinics were without medicine and equipment, but soap, refrigerators, air conditioners, and other electrical equipment, as well as large quantities of medicines – all stamped "Ministry of Public Health" – turned up on the black market. The authorities, after first censoring an exposé of graft in *La Prensa*, accused a ring of corrupt officials headed by the minister of health, who was later fired. There have also been reports of illegal sales of state agricultural machinery, public land, and gas rationing coupons, as well as arbitrary police fines and embezzlement by bank's of state companies.

On April 3, 1985, the head of the Sandinista national police said, "The problem of corruption and economic crime is so great that it could damage Nicaragua as much as counterrevolutionary activity." He was no doubt correct in saying that "counterrevolutionary elements can easily take advantage of the discontent that generalized corruption produces among the masses."

Most of the protest against corruption, however, was not planned by the rebels, who have been notably unsuccessful in organizing opposition in the cities. Many of the local demonstrations that have taken place seem to have been spontaneous, like the sandrafi protests and the "trendy riot" in Managua last June, when a group of women and children invaded a state warehouse after word spread that thousands of boxes of East German and Bulgarian candy were melting in the heat.[3]

Through the spring and summer of 1985 popular protests increased. On May Day, fifteen hundred workers tried to

[1] See my article on the elections in *The New York Review* (December 5, 1985).

[2] The currency devaluation of more than 800 percent was intended to revive Nicaragua's exports, which had shrunk from $646 million in 1978 to $420 million in 1984, producing a commercial deficit of nearly half a billion dollars. The government reportedly began negotiations with the International Monetary Fund. Private Sandinista and IMF sources say these negotiations are being directed by Joaquin Cuadra Chamorro, president of the Central Bank and a moderate.

[3] Announcing the formation of "a National Commission of Struggle Against Corruption" in April 1985, Vice-President Sergio Ramirez attributed the increase in corruption to the rapid growth of the state sector since the revolution and to "survivals of Somocismo." According to the newspaper of the Nicaraguan Communist party, *Avance* (March 1985), "the fundamental cause of corruption is the ruling party's concept of power which squanders public funds as private property." The real salaries of "ministers, vice-ministers, and other officials [are] kept secret," *Avance* said, and these officials are "provided automobiles, exempted from paying for rent, telephone, electricity, water while they are paid in dollars for purchases at the diplomatic store, in Panama or Miami."

Since 1980 Sandinista officials have blamed their much-commented-on administrative inefficiency on a "lack of trained cadre." Agustin Jarquin, leader of the opposition Social Christian party, argues that both inefficiency and corruption derive from the general practice of awarding government jobs and promotions on the basis of Sandinista party loyalty.

Jorge Alanez Pinell, a former high-ranking Sandinista government official, recounts some striking cases of government corruption and waste (see Jorge Alanez Pinell, *Nicaragua*, Costa Rica: Ecumoo, 1985, chapters 7 and 8). Alanez Pinell and other analysts trace Nicaragua's corruption and poor economic record to the departure of qualified technicians and bureaucrats from the original revolutionary coalition. Idaye Linda Wolas in a revealing series of ar-

church from a church to a working-class neighborhood of Managua, where they heard a sermon from Archbishop Obando y Bravo, to a site where a union leader had been killed in the struggle against Somoza. Sandinista police had further broken up the march. Several weeks earlier, union complaints had forced the government to raise wages. But with inflation running at 200 percent a year, prices rose several times faster. In September a leftist construction-union leader began a hunger strike demanding that the Christmas bonanza, which the Sandinistas had cancelled, be restored. He was immediately arrested but other labor unions took up his demands. Workers in government unions have taken part in unauthorized strikes, notwithstanding the assurances in August of Comandante Bayardo Arce, one of the most powerful of the Sandinista leaders, that

> Nicaraguan workers now have class consciousness, because they do not expect salary increases, a reduction of the work week, or an increase in vacations. On the contrary, the workers have renounced all that. Payment for overtime has been replaced by the revolutionary concept of voluntary work and other necessary sacrifices for the defense of the revolution.

Fewer and fewer workers show the kind of enthusiasm Arce describes. A significant number of young Nicaraguans, however, are willing to make sacrifices for the revolution, especially those who have voluntarily joined the armed forces. They point to the benefits of the revolution for health, education, and the distribution of land. As Arturo Cruz told the novelist Mario Vargas Llosa in an interview published in *The New York Times* of April 28, 1985,

> the literacy campaign, rural development, the improved status of women – they are all positive. But [the Sandinistas'] most important achievement is that they have broken down the tremendous class barriers that once divided society. The Sandinistas' mistake is thinking that none of these accomplishments is compatible with freedom.[1]

The well-to-do leaders of the right wing of the Nicaraguan political opposition have become paralyzed since the elections of 1984. They fear Sandinista reprisals and are suspicious of all the other opposition groups. They dream of a US invasion. The more moderate and left-wing parties representing professionals and workers have been far more active. In late September 1985 the Social Christian party called a meeting that brought out more people than could fit into the theater in Managua where the meeting took place. Virgilio Godoy, leader of the Independent Liberal party (PLI), told me in November that during 1985 his party was able to "organize nationally" for the first time, despite the arrest of more than fifty activists and the drafting of many more into the army. A young PLI leader told me, "We have a motivation [matter] that we are struggling not so much for political power but for the survival of our culture, our national identity." I heard similar views from Socialist party activists. Two other Marxist-Leninist parties have also joined in protests organized by trade unions and opposition political parties.

2.

In previous crises Nicaraguans have turned to the Church as the symbol of national identity. A small number of priests have joined with the regime, which has supported a "people's church." But as Vargas Llosa wrote in his *New York Times* article, "the efforts of the leaders of the 'people's church' to combine politics and religion have only found a response in the intellectually militant members of the middle class, most of whom are already converts." The "people's church," he wrote, "is largely composed of members of the religious elite – priests and laymen whose intellectual dispositions and sociopolitical work is beyond the scope of most of the Catholic poor."

The traditional Church has been increasingly estranged from the regime since the early 1980s, and there seems no doubt that large numbers of Catholics see the Church as an ally against an oppressive system. On June 14, 280,000 Nicaraguans went to the airport to greet Miguel Obando y Bravo when he returned from Rome where he was elevated from archbishop to cardinal, some of them waiting since 9:00 AM for the cardinal's plane to arrive at 5:00 PM. It took the cardinal's car nine hours to drive through the dense crowd to his house, six miles from the airport. Many in the crowd shouted, "Christianity yes, Communism no" and "the [Sandinista] Front must go," jeered at Sandinista police, and attacked foreign journalists as "counterrevolution" or government collaborators. When the government tried to disperse the crowds by switching off street lights, people burned tires by the roadside and lit torches.

Like many of the other Nicaraguans who are now the active leaders of the opposition inside the country, Obando y Bravo is not a man of the right. He was twice called upon by the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) to arrange the release of Sandinista political prisoners from Somoza's jails and issued statements justifying armed rebellion against Somoza. He now says that Nicaraguans "want neither communism nor capitalism," a view that implicitly criticizes some of the important supporters of the rebel forces as well as the Sandinistas. The cardinal has called for a dialogue between the two sides. He began holding masses throughout the country this summer, preaching a message of "unity and national reconciliation," which attracted large crowds. The Sandinistas sent armed security agents to the Catholic radio station to stop them from broadcasting tapes of his talks. Eleven missionaries who had been assured that they were exempt from military service were drafted into the army in late September 1985, and immigration authorities threatened to expel fifteen foreign priests if they made statements critical of FSLN policies.

On October 12 security officials confiscated both the first issue of a new Church newspaper and the printing press. Three days later Louis Cortes, head of

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[1] Other former members of the Sandinista government question the Sandinistas' commitment to women's rights. See Xavier Arguello, "A Guerrilla and His PEN," *The New Republic* (February 24, 1986).

Sandinista state security, had a raid on the Church's welfare office, a center for Catholic activists, and prevented priests from entering it. Then came Daniel Ortega's decree of October 15, suspending the rights of speech, assembly, personal security, and freedom of movement, and labor's right to organize strikes. Americas Watch has reported that several hundred people have been arrested, questioned, and then released since the emergency decree. They have included the Catholic and Evangelical clergy, trade-union leaders, and a well-known journalist. According to the Nicaraguan Permanent Commission on Human Rights, two Social Christian party activists were brutally murdered in November, one after being tortured. Ortega blamed "US imperialism" and rebel "sabotage and political destabilization" for the decree; but the main targets of the actions taken under it have not been saboteurs or people giving assistance to the rebels but the civilian political opposition and, primarily, the Church.

Adolfo Calero, leader of the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN)

During the weeks that followed the October 15 decree, Sandinista authorities intensified their campaign against the Catholic Church and other religious organizations. State security officials detained and questioned several Catholic priests and Evangelical ministers. They were stripped and subjected to long interrogations while naked. At the end of December the Catholic radio station was closed down. *La Prensa*'s editor told me that censorship was more severe than ever—articles that were censored included announcements of confirmations and baptisms and news of hurricanes, as well as reports of the decisions of the National Assembly. The ban on outdoor meetings has not prevented many thousands from attending Cardinal Obando y Bravo's masses in fields and public squares. He told me: "Twenty thousand people will not fit into a church."

I was able to see what the cardinal meant on November 7 when he held a mass in Ocotal, a small town several miles from the Honduran border, in an area contested by the rebels. Three thousand people came on foot from small hamlets in the region. Some had been walking for days. The authorities did not set up roadblocks to keep people from entering Ocotal, as they had done previously for two larger masses that had been held elsewhere since the October 15 decree. They refused to allow business in Ocotal to close that day, however, and prohibited public employees from attending the service. When the cardinal arrived, the crowd surged forward, carrying me into the church with it. Inside people were so packed together it was difficult to breathe and impossible to move. The cardinal's theme was that the Nicaraguan people were a people estranged from itself, from truth, from God.

Obando y Bravo told me he sought to be "the voice of those who have no voice." With the various members of the political opposition unable to act freely and the weak and divided leaders of the Coordinadora—the coalition of conservatives and liberals that mounted the principal challenge to the regime before the 1984 election—out of popular favor, Miguel Obando y Bravo has emerged as its undisputed leader. The Catholic Church is the only national institution capable of resisting the government, and, as in Poland, a sort of "dual power" exists in Nicaragua. Political and military power is in the hands of the FSLN, but the cardinal is the leader who clearly seems to have the broadest social and moral appeal. The Church cannot organize an open political opposition, but the Sandinista leaders are unable to impose socialism on the Cuban model, not because many of them do not wish to but because they fear a resistant population.

3.

After the elections many more Nicaraguans turned to armed resistance. "In December and January . . . volunteers streamed into the rebel border camps," Julia Preston of *The Boston Globe* reported on March 18, 1985. In January Arturo Cruz—who had been an official in the revolutionary government and then the leader of the Coordinadora before the elections—changed his position. In November he had said that the new president should be given a "period of grace" to see whether the regime would allow a "political opening." In January he declared that unless the Sandinistas removed Soviet and Cuban military assistance, he would support a resumption of US funding for the rebels. Cruz, like some other former anti-Somocistas who had tried to oppose the Sandinistas peacefully inside Nicaragua, now moved toward an alliance with the rebels—an alliance, as we shall see, that has left him far from his announced goal of leading a united democratic opposition movement.

In Washington, House Speaker "Tip" O'Neill has called the rebels "butchers and murderers"; the Reagan administration has hailed them as "freedom fighters and democracy," "our brothers," "the moral equal of our founding fathers." Most of the rebels, who reject the word "contra" as a pejorative Sandinista label, claim that they fight "to restore the original goals of the revolution," including pluralism and democratic institutions.

How seriously can such claims be taken? The rebel leaders are drawn from former officers and troops of Somoza's National Guard, from pro- and anti-Somoza businessmen and politicians, former Sandinista fighters, and Indian leaders. Repeated efforts to unite them have failed. Most of them have had support from the CIA, and the story of their shifting relations with secret US agencies is central to any understanding of them. They are organized in several armed groups, from the financially anti-communist leaders of the Honduran-based FDN (Nicaraguan Democratic Force) to the divided social democrats of the "southern front" on the Costa Rican border who were originally drawn to Eden Pastora, the former Sandinista who left Nicaragua in 1981, protesting the "Cubanization of the Nicaraguan revolution." Pastora and his allies sought negotiations with the Sandinistas on several occasions. The FDN, until 1984, attacked as capitulation all efforts to negotiate. Of the two groups of Indian combatants, Misura has been allied with the FDN and Misurasata was formerly allied with Pastora.[1]

The fighting in eastern Nicaragua (which Nicaraguans call the Atlantic Coast) has usually appeared to outsiders as a baffling sideshow. It is Nicaragua's oldest but least publicized insurgency, in

[1]Misurasata was created after the revolution by members of the Miskito, Sumo, and Rama ethnic groups. The name is a combination of the first letters of Miskito, Sumo, Rama, and Sandinista, and the Miskito words "Asla takanka" (meaning "together"). Misura drops the reference to Sandinista.

which groups of Creoles and Indians, mainly Miskitos—who are largely Protestant and do not speak Spanish—have been resisting Sandinista control. Between 1980 and 1985 perhaps one quarter of all rebels came from the Atlantic Coast. Missionaries, refugees, and even some government officials say that this is where the government has been most unpopular and had least authority after the Sandinista takeover in 1979. Miskito fighters have been able to enter almost any village in the region, under the cover of night.

Outside governments—Spanish, British, American—have seen the Atlantic Coast as a strategically important part of Nicaragua, and so have the Sandinistas since coming to power. The region has gold, lumber, and fish. It also has a long border with Honduras, and its ports are vital for receiving Cuban supplies. Immediately after the takeover Sandinistas dispatched troops as well as scores of Cuban doctors, nurses, and teachers to help pacify the region. The highly independent indigenous population resented the arbitrary behavior of Sandinista soldiers, their political indoctrination, and the raising of Cuban flags. The Sandinistas often responded by denying much-needed supplies to the Miskitos, who, some of the *comandantes* said, were suffering from "massive ideological backwardness." Miskitos resisted the government's attempts to replace communal lands and tribal organization with state farms and block committees. Early in 1981 the government arrested approximately thirty Miskito leaders, setting off a wave of protest along the Atlantic Coast. By the fall of 1981 there was intense fighting between Indian fighters and government troops. "The Nicaraguan government," Penny Lernoux observed in *The Nation* of September 14, 1985, "allowed its distrust of the Indians to degenerate into civil war, and with each spiral in the violence it became more difficult for the Sandinistas to understand that ethnicity cannot be squeezed into the mold of class struggle." (See also her article in the *National Catholic Reporter*, April 26, 1985.)

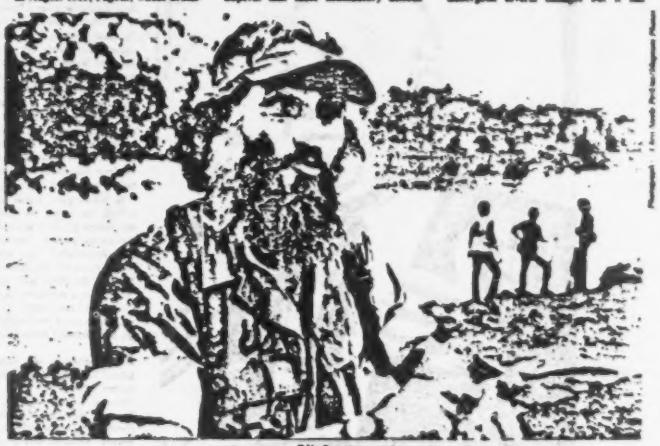
The Sandinistas' next move, in December 1981, was to forcibly relocate forty-two Miskito villages near the Honduran border into resettlement camps—about eighty-five hundred people in all. An exodus of ten thousand Miskitos into Honduras followed the episode, and in November 1982 another seven thousand Indians were transferred to state-owned coffee plantations.*

The two Indian guerrilla groups on the Atlantic Coast since 1981, Misura and Misurasata, cooperate in the field but their leaders have been bitterly antagonistic. Misura's longstanding chief, Firstdenon Fagoth, linked himself almost from the outset with the right-wing leaders of the FDN. The principal Misurasata leader, Brooklyn Rivera, claims that Fagoth tried to assassinate him. Both men had been accused of using violence to eliminate rivals. Rivera made a tactical alliance with Edén Pastora, but he has been concerned almost exclusively with the persecution of the Indians. Late in 1984 he began to negotiate with the Sandinistas for Indian land rights and a cease-fire. In May 1985 these talks were cut off when the Sandinista minister of the interior Tomás Borge announced that a national autonomy commission was being created to deal with the Miskito problem and demanded that Rivera declare an unconditional cease-fire if the talks were to continue.

In August 1985, Fagoth, whose brutality and abuses toward civilians embarrassed some of his own supporters, was expelled from Misura. Later that month, Rivera† claims, the Honduran authorities, with the complicity of the US, kept him from attending an "Indian unity" meeting on Honduran territory. At the meeting a statement was issued announcing that a new Miskito organization called Kisan had been formed. It was immediately denounced by some of the former leaders of Misura and the current leaders of Misurasata as the artificial creation of the FDN. Rivera protested that the FDN had "seized and intimidated Miskito community leaders, demanding that they either support the FDN or be killed."

The Sandinistas have been unable to subdue the Atlantic Coast. "The people reject the troops," Mason Collins, the local director of the Protestant Committee for Aid and Development, told *The New York Times* in an interview published on February 8. "Many people believe nothing good can come from the Sandinistas." Since last autumn there has been an unstable, unofficial truce in the region. The Sandinistas have allowed Miskitos to reunite in their burned-out villages. They have granted an amnesty to Miskito fighters, started informal talks with guerrillas in the field, and cut ill Sandinista troops out of Miskito villages to barracks in coastal cities. Some Sandinista supporters, who were distressed by the treatment of the Miskitos, are hopeful that these conciliatory actions mark a decisive change in the FSLN's attitude. Since the beginning of 1985 several thousand Miskito refugees in Honduras have returned to the Atlantic Coast; and since early December flights have taken refugees from Mosquitia in Honduras to Puerto Cabezas in Nicaragua. Rivera, for his part, claims that the Sandinistas, unable to pacify the Atlantic region, have had to settle for an uneasy truce there in order to concentrate their efforts against the FDN in the north.

Fighting has continued on the Atlantic Coast. In late October, Miskito troops dynamited a key bridge north of Puerto Cabezas. On February 8, Stephen Kinzer reported in *The New York Times* that in late January the Sandinistas had carried out bombing attacks on at least three Miskito Indian villages in the area near Leymakon. In one of the attacks rockets and five-hundred-pound bombs were dropped from two planes and a helicopter. "Villagers said they suspected the bombing might have been aimed at a group of rebels led by Brooklyn Rivera," who had returned to Nicaragua to "discuss the military and political situation with other Miskitos."‡



Eden Pastora

Photograph © Jean Gaumy/Magnum Photos

Reynaldo Reyes, the Miskito leader of the largest group observing the cease-fire, said that "the bombing was a serious violation of our agreement" and that it endangered the truce. Bishop Hedley Wilson, the leader of the Moravian Church in Nicaragua, told Kinzer that he "hoped the Government would halt all bombing in and around the villages" because "these people aren't armed and they aren't actually involved in any conflict." Rivera and his group escaped in a boat to an island off Nicaragua.

4.

The FDN is the largest and most successful rebel group. Its military forces were not organized by "lovers of freedom and democracy" and they are not led by such people now. The top leadership has undergone several changes but it has always consisted of National Guard officers. Its precise origins are difficult to trace, but the FDN began by bringing together different groups of guardsmen who had stationed after the Sandinista takeover in 1979. Some were trying to carry on fighting on the Nicaragua-Honduras border; others took odd jobs or worked as hired gunmen in Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador; still others were in Florida.

One group of perhaps twenty junior National Guard officers (formerly part of a US-trained elite battalion) met in the offices of a group of Cuban exiles where they took an oath of loyalty with blood ties, and proclaimed themselves bound by a right-wing doctrine—devotion to the cause of anticommunism and to overthrowing the Sandinistas. They were determined to avenge Sandinista persecution of their former National Guard comrades.† But they had no money. At first most of the senior National Guard officers, as well as politicians, businessmen,

*"There have been conflicting accounts of the relocation of 1981. The report of the Latin American Commission on Human Rights of the OAS found it to be justified, at least on a temporary basis, by the "emergency situation" resulting from rebel incursions.

Another report, by the International League for Human Rights, challenged this interpretation, concluding that "the forcible relocation of the Miskito Indians (1) was well planned long before it was put into effect, (2) was extended to villagers a distance from the border regions and especially from the zone of conflict; (3) was conducted without compensation to the displaced persons; and (4) has resulted in the continuing restrictions on movements of displaced persons. All these factors indicate that the relocation measures far exceeded what is required by the exigencies of the situation."

†A similar view was expressed in testimony to the OAS commission by Armstrong Wiggins, a Miskito Indian who formerly worked for the Sandinista government and later became associated with the Indian Law Research Center in Washington.

See the OAS "Report on the Human Rights of a Segment of the Nicaraguan Population of Miskito Origin" (November 29, 1983 and May 16, 1984) and "Nicaragua's Indians," issued by the International League for Human Rights (July 1983). Wiggins's testimony was given to the commission on March 2, 1982, April 12, 1983, and May 11, 1984. By 1984 it was estimated that as much as a third of the Indian population had been displaced. See Shirley Christian, *Nicaragua: Revolution in the Family* (Random House, 1985), p. 266.

‡See Stephen Kinzer, *The New York Times* (February 8, 1986), p. 2, and the UPI dispatch on the same page.

†The three thousand guardsmen were dealt with severely. "Special tribunals," composed of their former enemies, were set up to judge them. No effort was made to identify the military units that had not participated in combat. Many guardsmen today remain in prison, unaware of their sentences or the length of their confinement.

and landlords, refused to meet with them. One exception was Colonel Enrique Bermúdez, the defense attaché in Washington during Somoza's last years. In early 1980, having received $300,000 from Somoza's[*] cousin, Luis Pallais Debayle, he began to organize this and the other groups of guardsmen into the September 15 Legion,' named after the date of Central America's liberation from Spain in 1821.

Under Bermúdez's command the Legion's headquarters were moved from training camps in Florida to Guatemala, at the time the center of a Central American terrorist network that harbored right-wing fugitives like Roberto d'Aubisson and provided training camps for Salvadoran death squads. Bermúdez negotiated an agreement with the Argentine military dictatorship. In exchange for money, arms, and training, the legion would pursue the "dirty war" against the Argentine *Montoneros* who had fled to Central America and to some of whom the Sandinistas had given sanctuary. A group of Bermúdez's men went to Argentina and received training there, not only in the use of arms but in techniques of "interrogation." The Argentine government later sent officers to Honduras to train Bermúdez's guerrillas. The legion also received money from Salvadoran businessmen.

Its first intelligence chief, Ricardo ("Chinó") Lau, was accused in 1984 by a former director of Salvadoran intelligence of helping d'Aubisson to assassinate Archbishop Oscard Arnulfo Romero. Lau was still associated with Bermúdez up to late 1984. During the 1980 Republican campaign Bermúdez also met with and got encouragement from some future members of the Reagan administration who were then close to Senator Jesse Helms.

Bermúdez was also making contact with the first of what were to be successive groups of former opponents of Somoza who were disenchanted with the Sandinistas. José Francisco ("Chicasio") Cardenal had participated with Pedro Joaquín Chamorro, the editor of *La Prensa*, in an unsuccessful guerrilla movement against Somoza in 1959. In 1978 he was a leader of the strikes that businessmen organized against Somoza. After the Sandinistas stacked the quasi-legislative Council of State in May 1980, Cardenal, who was its vice-president, left Nicaragua and formed the Nicaraguan revolutionary democratic alliance (ADREN). ADREN entered into a short-lived, shaky alliance with Bermúdez's September 15 Legion. This was the first of many unsuccessful attempts to merge anti-Somocistas with Bermúdez's group. When the two organizations separated in October 1980, Cardenal joined two brothers who had fought against Somoza, Fernando ("El Negro") and Edmundo Chamorro and a distant relative, the former Jesuit professor Edgar Chamorro.[**] They formed an organization called the Nicaraguan Democratic Union (UDN).

In the summer of 1981 another attempt was made to unite the two anti-Sandinista groups—the UDN with about one hundred members, and the September 15 Legion with about seventy-five. "El Negro" Chamorro refused to have anything to do with the ex-guardsmen but Cardenal and Edgar Chamorro agreed to do so, and in October 1981 the FDN was founded by merging the September 15 Legion with a section of the UDN led by Cardenal.

Edgar Chamorro told me that he and Cardenal had hesitated to join forces with former guardsmen: "They were the ones who had persecuted our family." Yet he decided to join for two reasons. The Sandinistas, he said, were "putting in place a Cuban-type system" and had become a "power elite unwilling to listen to anyone outside the party's inner circle." Furthermore:

> The Americans told us we must unite to get their backing. It was a marriage of convenience. We needed to build an army, and we saw Bermúdez as a professional military man; the military types needed moderate, democratic credentials and contacts. We thought the Americans would help us subordinate them [the military] to us [the civilians].

He was not the first Nicaraguan democrat to harbor such illusions or to say he felt trapped between Sandinista intransigence and American blindness.

Cardenal says a State Department official, Secretary Alexander Haig's special assistant, General Gordon Sumner, "insinuated" to him that unity with the former guardsmen would assure a flow of money to the rebels. Cardenal's first meeting with the CIA was in July 1981. The insurgents, he was told, should cooperate with the Honduran and Argentine governments with whom, it was clear, the CIA was in close touch.

In August 1981 Reagan's assistant secretary for Inter-American affairs, Thomas Enders, traveled to Managua where he promised the Sandinistas to keep out of Nicaragua's internal affairs if the Sandinistas ceased arming and otherwise assisting the Salvadoran rebels. Enders failed to get an agreement, and in November 1981 the White House authorized CIA funding for the Nicaraguan rebels.

Shortly before this, Bermúdez,[†] on instructions from an Argentine colonel in charge of relations with the FDN, moved his headquarters to Honduras, where the FDN was assured it would get a friendly reception from General Gustavo Alvarez, the Commander in Chief of the Honduran armed forces and a protégé of the Argentine military. The CIA provided supplies and training in sabotage. In March of 1982, FDN saboteurs trained by the CIA blew up two bridges in northern Nicaragua; the Sandinistas, in response, declared a state of emergency.

Enders, according to State Department sources, saw support of the FDN as a "second track," a way to pressure the Sandinistas to commit to US demands (especially that they end their involvement in El Salvador), but also as a means

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[*] Richard Millett, the leading historian of the Nicaraguan military, says that Bermúdez had "independent contacts with U.S. military personnel" but "no connections with [Somoza's] atrocities" (Richard Millett, "Praetorians or Patriots," in Robert S. Leiken, *Central America: Anatomy of Conflict*, Pergamon/Carnegie, 1984). Nevertheless, unlike some other National Guard officers, Bermúdez did not rebel against Somoza or denounce his regime after it fell.

[**] The Chamorros of Granada are the best known of the prominent Nicaraguan "historical families." Several Nicaraguan presidents and Conservative party leaders have come from this family as well as Pedro Joaquín Chamorro, the late editor of *La Prensa*. Edgar Chamorro's grandparents were third cousins to Pedro's. The Chamorro brothers are more distantly related to Edgar.

of appealing the far-right-wing forces inside and outside the Reagan administration, who were determined to overthrow the Sandinista regime. In August 1983, Julio Lopez, the FSLN's top foreign-policy official, told me in Managua, "We can accept the Enders deal" on El Salvador. But by then what was called the "second track" was already central to the Reagan administration's policy. Nicaragua was deeply divided, and the rebels had become a major military force based in the Honduran camps, where CIA officials were replacing the Argentine officers in charge of training.

5.

A second wave of former opponents of Somoza left Nicaragua in 1982, this time led by dissident Sandinistas, including "Comandante Cero," Edén Pastora, who was famous for having led the raid on the National Palace in 1978, and, later, for his command of the southern front in the war against Somoza. Pastora's departure from Nicaragua, along with that of his chief associates, including Carlos Coronel and Lionel Poveda, marked the first major break in Sandinista unity. Pastora traveled to Cuba, Panama, and Guatemala – where, he told me, the Sandinistas blocked his participation in the Guatemalan revolutionary movement even though he had been given $5 million by the Libyan government for the revolutionaries. He came to the surface in early 1982 in Mexico. There he met Duane ("Dewey") Claridge (whom Pastora knew as Mr. Maroni), the CIA agent charged with organizing the *contras*.

The CIA began to finance Pastora's organization in 1982, and in 1983, from what I have been told by both US government and rebel sources, the CIA gave more money to Pastora than it did to the FDN. Dewey Claridge considered the charismatic ex-Sandinista more likely than Bermúdez to win Nicaraguan and international support, even if Pastora resisted advice to make his organization more efficient and resented any suggestion that he was serving US interests.

At this point, the Reagan administration officials did not agree about their aims in backing Nicaragua rebel forces: Was it to bring down the Sandinista regime or to force it into making concessions? But their tactics were clear. There were now two basic ideological camps in the resistance – the first was on the northern border, in Honduras, composed of national guardsmen and backed by traditional right-wing party leaders and former associates of Somoza, many of them in Miami; the second, based in Costa Rica on the southern border, consisted of former Sandinistas and social and Christian democrats. The CIA backed both, intending to combine them into one. But it wanted to be sure that whichever side it backed would accept American political and military instructions.

During the summer of 1982 Pastora united his group with Alfonso Robelo's Nicaraguan Democratic Movement (MDN) – a social democratic organization with some five hundred members, which had been closely allied with the moderate Terceristа wing of the Sandinista movement during the insurrection – and with Brooklyn Rivera's Misurasata. They formed ARDE (Revolutionary Democratic Alliance). While Dewey Claridge was urging ARDE to merge with the FDN, throughout 1982 and early 1983 Pastora and Robelo were requesting negotiations with the Sandinistas on their proposals for restoring civil liberties, dispensing with Cuban advisers, and adopting a nonaligned foreign policy. They sought, unsuccessfully, the good offices of European social democrats and Congressional liberals both to intercede with the Sandinistas and to give them backing in Washington. (Prime Minister Soares of Portugal, they said, gave them some encouragement.) Carlos Coronel, then Pastora's chief political adviser, traveled to Havana to discuss a Nicaraguan settlement with Cuban officials. Nothing came of these talks either. In April 1983 Pastora's guerrilla forces, by now more than a thousand men, including several hundred former Sandinista soldiers, entered Nicaragua near the Costa Rican border; he was again commanding a "southern front," as he had in the war against Somoza.

Meanwhile, within the FDN's political directorate, relations with Cardenal grew tense. Cardenal told me that Bermúdez and his right-hand man, a former landowner named Aristides Sanchez, wanted the FDN to be "a political party to seize power just like the Sandinistas, not a liberation movement to organize elections." Cardenal told Sanchez: "You're serving the Argentines just as your father served Somoza." According to Cardenal, Bermúdez and his National Guard associates "promoted an invasion by a conventional army; we wanted a guerrilla war with internal support."

Cardenal, by now an honorary member of the FDN's political directorate, told me that in May 1982 he sought out Pastora in Costa Rica. Pastora told Cardenal that he could not join with the FDN so long as it included Lau and Bermúdez. In August 1982 Edmundo Chamorro of the UDN told me that he and his brother favored uniting UDN, ARDE, and the FDN. But Cardenal's talks with Pastora infuriated the FDN leadership. Cardenal claims that Bermúdez tried to assassinate him.

During 1982 and 1983 the Sandinistas' conflicts with the Church, the trade unions, peasants, and Indians, together with the unpopular draft, increased the number of rebel recruits beyond the expectations of their leaders and CIA sponsors. According to congressional intelligence committees and journalists covering the war, the FDN grew from six hundred in 1982 to between four and five thousand in March 1983 to twelve thousand by early 1985 (not including several thousand unequipped combatants). Pastora's ARDE had as many as six thousand recruits by early 1984, most of them unarmed. Both in northern and southern Nicaragua (not to mention the Atlantic Coast) the local population often provided the rebel group with food, shelter, and information. The first American reporters who traveled with the FDN in the spring of 1983 found, as James LeMoyne reported in *Newsweek*, that northern peasants "seemed to welcome" the insurgents."[*]

To the surprise of many in the CIA, Bermúdez's FDN, not Pastora's ARDE, benefited most from the Sandinistas' problems. The FDN, with its well-organized camps in Honduras, was able to absorb new recruits more effectively. To quiet the concerns of congressional supervisory committees, the CIA decided to improve the group's political image and to try to remove the stench of its Argentine and Guatemalan connections by bringing in recognized anti-Somocista leaders. A CIA agent using the alias Tony Feldman went to Miami to interview candidates. A new set of leaders was produced at a December 1982 news conference, including Edgar Chamorro and a former Sandinista named Indalecio Rodriguez, along with Bermúdez. As Chamorro recalled: "It was done in a big hurry.... The CIA was anxious to please Congress." "Chamorro" Cardenal claims that the powerful exiles of the Nicaraguan oligarchy, including Edgar Chamorro, saw to it that he was excluded. He later told me he regarded the National Guard officers as "more trusted employees of Somoza now working for new bosses." Cardenal now runs an insurance agency in Miami.

6.

In January 1983 Adolfo Calero joined the FDN directorate. Calero had been a leader of the Conservative party and was active in the strikes that helped bring down Somoza, but he also had long-standing ties with the CIA. According to Edgar Chamorro, the CIA summarily installed him as president of the National Directorate and Commander in Chief of the FDN. During 1983 and 1984, Calero removed several former National Guard officers accused of corruption and abuse of authority. The CIA also formulated a "code of conduct" for the FDN and wrote a new notorious field manual which the administration claimed was designed to curtail FDN terrorism. But it included instructions on how to "neutralize," i.e., assassinate, local Sandinista officials. American Watch and American journalists have published reports of operations against Sandinista officials that were carried out in ways that could have been suggested by the manual.[**]

Though ARDE found support in isolated southeastern Nicaragua and occasionally carried out successful guerrilla attacks, Pastora proved to be a disappointment to his followers. His former associates say that his sense of having been deceived by the Sandinistas made him regard subordinates as potential rivals for power. When Comandante Luis Rivas became known for a successful attack on a Sandinista patrol, Pastora dismissed him. In 1983 and 1984, Pastora broke with virtually all of his potential comrades, including Alfonso Robelo, Brooklyn Rivera, and Carlos Coronel, and many field commanders as well. In August 1984 Robelo told me, "I'll always be Edén's friend, but it's impossible to be his ally." After ARDE broke up, a collection of feuding factions remained on the southern front.

Pastora's associates say that between January 1983 and the spring of 1984, he received as much as $650,000 a month from the CIA, together with nine air drops of equipment and arms. Yet Pastora failed to pose a serious military challenge to the Sandinistas and wasted the aid he got. Arms supplied by the CIA turned up on the Costa Rican black market. On one occasion, an ARDE task force sabotaged the wrong cables and blacked out southern Honduras instead of Managua.

Many people have supposed that the CIA connection damaged Pastora, but the reverse may also be true. The decision to support him was a departure from the conventional CIA practice of backing reliable pro-Americans like Calero. It was

[*] See James LeMoyne, *Newsweek* (April 11, 1983), and Christopher Dickey, *The Washington Post* (April 3, 4, 5, 1983).

[**] See, for example, Dan Williams's report in the *Los Angeles Times* (August 14, 1985).

be compared with the Soviets' decision in the mid-1970s to back *Fidelista* political-military fronts like the Sandinistas instead of traditional Communist parties." Pastora's incompetence embarrassed his CIA sponsors. When his organization began to fall apart, the CIA lost ground in the bureaucratic contest it was carrying on with the National Security Council for control over operations against the Sandinistas. Dewey Claridge and other CIA officials who had supported Pastora were transferred.

After the CIA cut off his funds in 1984 and an attempt was made to kill him, Pastora told me that the FDN, the CIA, and the FSLN were all plotting together to destroy his reputation. In early 1985, he turned for financial help to Cuban exiles in Miami. In June 1985 the FSLN carried out a successful offensive against his troops near the Costa Rican border. His past allies fault him not for accepting CIA funds—which they regard as unavoidable in a war against what they regard as a repressive regime armed by the rival superpower—but for weakening the forces that might have worked out a "democratic option" on the southern front and thus strengthening the FDN.

Arturo Cruz and Alfonso Robelo say that Pastora's failure left them no choice but to press for reform inside the FDN even as they tried slowly to reassemble the southern front. In June 1984, Robelo broke with Pastora and became yet another of the former Somoza opponents (like "Chicano" Cardenal and Edgar Chamorro) who sought to make the FDN a democratic organization—and who were used to give it legitimacy. During that month Chamorro quit the FDN, denouncing it for concealing human rights abuses, for its abject dependence on the CIA, and for its authoritarian mentality."

In February 1985, after he was blocked from participating in the elections of 1984, Arturo Cruz agreed to ally himself with the FDN—on the understanding, he said, that "its internal reform process would continue and gather steam." In June, he, Calero, and Robelo announced the formation of the Nicaraguan Opposition Union (UNO), which Robelo called "an umbrella for all democratic forces." Cruz told me his experience with the Sandinistas convinced him that they would never agree to a political settlement unless there was a "broad democratic opposition alliance" that was backed by a military force but not subordinate to it. In *The New York Times* of November 4, James LeMoyne gave a revealing account of the difficulties he and Robelo have faced in achieving this goal:

> Disagreements between the three UNO directors have been made more acute because Mr. Calero is also the head of the Nicaraguan Democratic Force, the largest and most effective guerrilla army. The position has allowed Mr. Calero to forge close ties with the White House and the CIA. As a consequence, Mr. Cruz and Mr. Robelo feel literally outgunned by Mr. Calero and at times have thought that when they argue with Mr. Calero they are also arguing with the CIA, according to three different rebel officials. Mr. Cruz and Mr. Robelo have no regular contact with top military commanders in Mr. Calero's rebel army, the officials said.

Other former associates of Pastora such as Carlos Coronel and Alfredo César still refuse to join with the FDN without guarantees that the FDN will be reformed. In August 1985, César, the former Sandinista secretary of the ruling junta and the former president of the Nicaraguan Central Bank, established SOS (Southern Opposition Bloc), a group that has had the backing of Pastora and some of the leaders of his guerrilla army, but very little money.

Enrique Bermúdez, military leader of the FDN

The experience of Robelo, "Chicano" Cardenal, and Alfredo César underlines the dilemma confronting Nicaraguan democrats who supported the revolution and believe it has been betrayed. Convinced as they are that military force is needed to persuade the Sandinistas to modify an increasingly repressive regime and allow the democratic opposition to take part in a political settlement, how can they mount such force without underwriting a group whose leaders are also hostile to democracy? Pastora's and César's alternative—a unification of the democratically minded rebels on the southern front that would advocate a separate "third way"—has so far failed to come about. In part this is because of Pastora's poor leadership and their own differences; but Pastora, Robelo, and César also blame it on the refusal of those they regard as their "natural allies"—American liberals and European and Latin American democrats—to back them. When they turn to such allies as Calero and Bermúdez, they have limited influence and are also denounced. Independent of the will of many of the combatants, the Nicaraguan conflict has been turned inexorably into a superpower conflict. Robelo and Cruz maintain an uneasy alliance with the FDN in the hope of reforming and broadening it to include the rest of the rebels on the southern border. But their attempt to reform the FDN will be an uphill struggle, to say the least.

7.

The cutoff in American aid in 1984 following the mining of a Nicaraguan harbor by the CIA created serious supply and intelligence problems for the FDN. It may also have increased the influence of the extreme right-wing groups in the US and abroad that back it. The FDN received military supplies from Taiwan, Guatemala, and rightist elements in the Salvadoran Air Force. From supposedly private groups in the US, Western Europe, South America, Taiwan, Israel, and South Korea, as well as Cuban exiles, has come an estimated $36 million in funds. The boards, benefactors, and members of these groups overlap and include such right-wing figures as Daniel O. Graham of High Frontier—the "Star Wars" lobby—Anna Chennault, the Rev. Sun Myung Moon, Pat Boone, Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson and the Christian Broadcasting Network, Joseph Coors, and Wayne Newton. The network is coordinated by a small group led by retired General John Singlaub, who was relieved of his command in South Korea by Presi-

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"See Robert S. Leiken, *Soviet Strategy in Latin America* (Praeger, 1982), ch. 4.

"He has since described his disillusionment with the FDN in a long affidavit to the World Court, published in part in *First Principles*, a publication of The Center for National Security Studies, Washington, DC (September–October 1985).

dent Carter for publicly criticizing the president. In the spring of this year, Singlaub reviewed the FDN troops in a rebel base on the Honduran-Nicaraguan border.

The US government secretly encouraged this "private-sector initiative" after Congress cut off CIA funds in 1984. On October 8, 1985, *The Washington Post* reported that White House officials chose Singlaub to coordinate fund raising for the FDN, and urged countries receiving US aid, such as Taiwan and South Korea, to raise money for the FDN through similar private networks. A National Security Council official took a leading part in raising money for the FDN. Though Cruz and Robelo have allies in the State Department and the NSC, they are up against a covert alliance of former National Guard officers, FDN and American extremists, foreign governments, and powerful elements in the Reagan administration. Strong ties of loyalty, or fealty, have developed between CIA officials acting as imperial patrons and their colonial adjutants in the FDN.

Weeks after Cruz and Robelo founded the UNO last June, Calero was refusing to carry out joint decisions and stacking the UNO with former Somoza officials.[*] He was also planting criticisms of Cruz in the Costa Rican and Miami press, and spreading rumors among FDN troops that Cruz "only wants to gain control of the FDN so he can negotiate them away to the Sandinistas." UNO and Congressional sources say that Calero obstructed the efforts of Cruz and Robelo to clean up FDN human-rights practices and tried to stop the UNO from getting control of US and private funds. Calero also opposed expanding the UNO to include Pastora and BOS last autumn. The BOS leaders said at the time that they would join UNO only if Calero stepped down as leader of the FDN.

Reports of Calero's intransigence, and of his backing from the White House and the CIA over other leaders, were disturbing to several moderate Democrats and Republicans who had, for the first time, voted for aid to the rebels last June and been promised by the President that human-rights abuses by the FDN would be strictly punished. They included Representative David McCurdy (D-Oklahoma), Dante Fascell (D-Florida), William Richardson (D-New Mexico), and Senator David Durenberger (R-Minnesota). After they expressed concern to the administration, Cruz was able to get support and funds for an independent UNO human-rights office, based in Costa Rica, to investigate the FDN's abuses. The office opened in January with a staff that included Ismael Reyes, the former president of the Nicaraguan Red Cross, Roberto Ferrey, who was exiled by Somoza and later became a legal adviser to the Sandinista ministry of justice, and Alberto Gamez Ortega, a former vice-minister of justice in the Sandinista government. They say they are collecting information on abuses both by the FDN and the Sandinistas. Whether they will have real power to monitor the FDN's activities and punish abuses remains to be seen. The UNO began talks with BOS in November that were soon suspended, and then resumed, with no results so far. There is little visible evidence that the basic situation described by LeMoyne, in which the dominance of Calero and Enrique Bermudez in the FDN military command has changed.

8.

While the top leaders of the FDN continue to refuse to share real power with such former supporters of the revolution as Cruz, Robelo, and Chamorro, the guerrilla forces themselves are too large and have too much support *inside* the country to be dismissed simply as a tool of the CIA. Bermudez, and Calero. There are some twenty thousand active armed insurgents from a Nicaraguan population of three million, of which the FDN makes up about twelve thousand. Absolutely and relative to each country's population, they outnumber the Salvadoran guerrillas—also thousand in a population of five million. The FDN claims that 40 percent of its troops are former Sandinista officers and less than 2 percent former national guardsmen.

The "*contras*" are no longer mercenary bands striking from border sanctuaries. Those who claim that the rebels could not exist without outside funding and training should recall the arguments that were made against the administration that the rebels in Salvador were a genuine indigenous force. In 1984 Sandinista officials acknowledged that quite aside from the troops in Honduras and Costa Rica, there were as many as eight thousand rebels inside Nicaragua. They have been unable to hold any territory against the Sandinistas' artillery and aerial attacks, but guerrilla units are able to move through three quarters of Nicaragua's mountainous terrain.

Daylight ambushes of army convoys suggest that, like the Salvadoran guerrillas, they receive information from local residents. The *Miami Herald* reported that the insurgents "appear to enjoy substantial and growing support among small farmers and campesinos." Dan Williams of the *Los Angeles Times* said that when an FDN force briefly captured La Trinidad, a village in the historically pro-Sandinista region of Estelí, "peasants led the rebels through Sandinista lines in the mountains."[*] Marcel Niedergang of *Le Monde* reported on November 28, 1985, that the contras' ability to open a new front of the war in the central Nicaraguan departments of Chontales and Boaco, nearly two hundred miles from the Honduran border, was "doubtless a sign of the complicity of the region's peasants." (Niedergang's report in *Le Monde* of December 3 gave further evidence of such "complicity.")

Such rebel sympathies on the part of the rural population were apparently among the main reasons the government decided to evacuate large numbers of peasants last spring to establish a free fire zone. According to *The New York Times* of March 19, 1985, the forced evacuations

> had two objectives, according to Sandinista officials [in Jinotega] and Western diplomats in Managua who specialize in military matters. The first is to deprive the rebels of material support and intelligence by removing relatives and neighbors sympathetic to them from war areas. But equally important, these sources said, is the creation of "free fire zones" where the Sandinista People's Army can operate freely among the rebels.

Journalists reported that in the areas around San José de Limay and El Naranjo Sandinista troops burned peasants' houses to prevent them from returning.[*]

"Unlike the struggle against Somoza," wrote former Panamanian vice-minister of health Hugo Spadafora a few months before he was murdered by Panamanian National Guardsmen in the fall of 1985, "this war...is predominantly a peasant insurrection." Spadafora was a doctor who once fought alongside the Sandinistas in 1979 and then later joined with Pastora and Rivera against the regime. He complained that the press "has neglected almost completely to cover the war in depth, in the heart of the country, the outward epicenter of the sanguine insurrection." The top rebel leaders, he said, "feel disciplined when the media fails to cover the war inside Nicaragua then...international exposure...will raise the status of middle level cadres that direct and commands the war effort deep within the country."

The growth of the FDN has created strains between the peasants, who make up its ranks, and the FDN leadership, which is still that, as we have seen, in Nicaragua's ancien régime. The FDN troops have their own beliefs that their own peasant culture, which should not be confused with that of the FDN's ancient, the Somozas' culture, which they loathe. Most of the FDN troops are peasants, small landholders, sharecroppers, and day farmers from the rugged and deeply Catholic north and from the sandy country in central Nicaragua. Most of them are dedicated to overthrowing the Sandinistas, whose agricultural policies left them much worse off, while government controls became more severe.

Some sense of their feelings is given by a "declassified study of the revolution by Professor Forrest D. Colburn of Princeton, to be published in May." Colburn writes that his general aim is to describe "the intentions of the Sandinista revolutionary elite and to explain why their rosy expectations were dashed even before they were confronted with a US-financed counter-revolution." He writes:

> The inability of the revolution to deal to provide a better standard of living and the unrelenting call for sacrifices have made many rural Nicaraguans sharply critical of the Sandinistas. For example, peasants interviewed outside the Jinotega mill they felt the Sandinistas were "working for themselves, and not for the people." More commonly, rural laborers are cynical, with the hope they had at the onset of the revolu-

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[*] *The Boston Globe* (September 1, 1985); *The Christian Science Monitor* (October 15, 1985).

[*] *The Miami Herald* (January 27, 1985); *The Los Angeles Times* (August 14, 1985).

[*] There have been conflicting reports both about the numbers of people forcibly relocated and the total number of people displaced. Americas Watch estimates from its own sources that at least twenty to twenty-five thousand people were forcibly relocated during 1985. Julia Preston wrote in *The Boston Globe* of August 22, 1985 that the "Sandinista troops drove an estimated 45,000 Nicaraguans from their homes in Estelí province in March." Amnesty International writes in its new report "Nicaragua, the Human Rights Record" that some seven thousand Nicaraguan families from Managua and Jinotega provinces were compulsorily relocated in March. Journalists have reported on the flight of tens of thousands of people to Honduras. On the burning of houses, see Edward Cody, *The Washington Post* (March 26, 1985).

[*] *Post-Revolutionary Nicaragua: State, Class, and the Dilemma of Agrarian Policy* (University of California Press).

tion dashed. When discussing their life since the revolution, peasants often make such comments as, "*Estamos jodidos*" ("We are screwed"). The attitude of many toward the regime is summed up by such remarks, common throughout rural Nicaragua, as "*La misma mierda, solamente las moscas son diferente*" ("The same shit; only the flies are different") and "*Un hueso diferente, el mismo perro*" ("A different bone, the same dog").

Colburn goes on to say that "the disenchantment of the rural poor cannot by any means be equated with support for the counterrevolution but it does complicate the already difficult task of improving the welfare of rural laborers." The attitudes he describes, in my view, help to explain the cooperation with the rebels that reporters have observed. The FDN, on the other hand, has shown little interest in recruiting middle-class young people from the cities in southern Nicaragua. Many young refugees from the cities prefer to sit out the war in camps in Honduras and Costa Rica because they do not trust the rebel leadership.

According to James LeMoyne, among the rebel groups themselves there is much unhappiness with the current CIA-imposed leadership, and many of the rebels he interviewed believed that a new, more legitimate leadership is needed." *Comandantes* in the field often share their troops' resentment of the FDN high command." As one former Pastora associate described them, "They're a mixed bag of Zapatas and Pancho Villas," i.e., peasant revolutionaries and rebel brigands. The FDN is a movement with a peasant base, some populist middle-echelon officers, and a mostly reactionary leadership imposed and maintained by the US.

The presence of former national guardsmen in the FDN officer corps is not in itself decisive. Former guardsmen occupy positions in most factions of the civil war. Bernardino Larios, the first Sandinista defense minister, was a former national guardsmen. Some FDN officers, according to Richard Millett, the leading authority on the National Guard,

> were last-minute additions to the guard; had they been offered any chance to retire after the revolution, they would have likely done so. But no offer was made and they became permanent exiles whose only real hope of returning was to overthrow the new regime."

But what is of greater concern is the fact that the FDN high command, with one exception, is drawn entirely from the National Guard, and many were senior officers in it. Most of these men are intensely loyal to Enrique Bermúdez and are called "Enrique's group." Together with Adolfo Calero and Aristides Sanchez they form a cabal that is closely linked to a shadowy network of expropriated landowners, bankers, and industrialists, and former associates of Somoza. These exiles influence the FDN leadership through family ties or as former or current employers. Most support flies for the FDN, as LeMoyne reported, "are handled by Mr. Calero and Mr. Calero's brother and brother-in-law." Surrounding the FDN are former Somocista military officials like "El Tigre" Medina. In April Calero was host at a fund-raising dinner at Medina's Miami restaurant; and in July a party was given in honor of Calero by the richest members of the Miami exile community. This reminded some of those present of similar celebrations in honor of Somoza.

9.

During the last half of 1983 the military initiative swung in the direction of the government. The Sandinistas, who have had much difficulty in organizing militias in rural zones, have been flying in troops to counter rebel raids on villages. In August in La Trinidad, and again in November in San Domingo in central Nicaragua, the Sandinistas used several Soviet-made MI-24 helicopters to disperse rebel attackers. In both these the helicopters caused civilian casualties. On the second occasion the rebels brought down a Soviet-made MI-8 helicopter, with a SA-7 anti-aircraft missile probably purchased in Portugal. The US administration claimed the helicopter was piloted by a Cuban." As Edward Cody of *The Washington Post* wrote recently (December 6, 1985):

> The Popular Sandinista Army, advised by Cuban officers and supplied through Soviet allies, has altered its size, tactics, organization and equipment significantly in the last two years to repel the guerrillas with increased speed and force, according to Nicaraguan officials and other military sources.
>
> The main rebel organization, the Honduras-based Nicaraguan Democratic Force, has suffered from a cutoff in CIA funding and logistical support during roughly the same period. As a result, according to these assessments, the rebels have been unable to resume the high level of attacks reached in the summer and fall of 1984.

Furthermore, the FDN rebels are not only politically divided, as we have seen, but poorly trained, and lacking in first-rate combat officers partly because of the absence of urban recruits.

10.

The war, meanwhile, has had little direct effect on Nicaragua's cities. It is difficult to know just what large numbers of people feel about the rebels. In August and November of 1984 I talked with more than a dozen people in Monimbo, the enclave of some fifty-five hundred Indians in the city of Masaya where an insurrection in February 1978 set off the uprising against Somoza. They told me that they and their neighbors listened regularly to the FDN's clandestine radio. They spoke admiringly of Edén Pastora. They told me they would support the rebels even though they distrusted the "*Guardias*," i.e., the national guardsmen.

I heard similar views from people I talked to in the shantytowns around Managua and also in the provincial cities of León, Chinandega, and Estelí, where there were insurrections against Somoza in 1978. In rural towns in Estelí province, several parents told me that their sons had gone off to join the rebels. Other poor people I talked to would start by supporting the regime and then express critical views as they overcame their initial distrust. Some who were critical of the regime were also opposed to the rebels. But the willingness of Nicaraguans who had fought against Somoza to cooperate with rebels, many of whose leaders are tainted with Somocismo, seemed to me to reflect a sense of desperation.

The FDN has done little to take advantage of growing urban discontent. This is not entirely because Sandinista control makes it difficult. That same month, the national leader of the CDSs (Sandinista Defense Committees), Leticia Herrera, announced that block committee watches would have to be reduced for lack of popular participation. She acknowledged that some block committee leaders are considered "*curiquez de barrio*" (neighborhood bosses). It is not only Sandinista security forces that have prevented the FDN from organizing dissidents in the cities; it is the narrowly militaristic character of the FDN itself. Its grave defects prevent it from rallying enough support inside and outside Nicaragua to modify the regime.

"*The New York Times* (April 23, 1985).

"From the FDN political directorate, for example, Alfonso Callejas charged Bermúdez with regarding the civilian leadership as mere front men (*Los Angeles Times*, March 4, 1985). In December 1983, FDN field commanders joined younger Honduran officers to protest against the FDN command. When Chicano Cardenal was political leader of the FDN, regional commanders complained to him that FDN officers beat their troops and robbed FDN funds.

"Richard Millett, "Praetorians or Patriots" in Robert S. Leiken, *Central America: Anatomy of Conflict*, p. 161. Elsewhere Millett had written of the "chronic discontent" among junior officers during Somoza's reign: "Many do have a sense of nationalism, a desire to see the Guardia develop a more honorable and professional image" (*Guardians of the Dynasty*, Orbis, 1979, page 258).

"See *The Washington Post* (December 7, 1985); *The New York Times* (December 6, 1985).

sequel to the "beautiful revolution." As a *New York Times* correspondent commented:

> Some of the violence . . . can only be described as fratricidal. Witnesses to the killing of Bayardo Cisneros, an official of the Phentecostes cooperatives, say his own cousin executed him using a machine gun and then a bayonet.

"One has the impression that a lot of personal scores are being settled," said a diplomat in Managua.[*] Americas Watch and other human-rights organizations have collected many statements from Nicaraguans charging appalling abuses by the FDN and Misura. The FDN's abuses have been reported to include deliberate terrorist tactics, kidnapping, sexual abuse of women captives, torture, routine summary execution of prisoners, causing people to "disappear" in Honduras, forcible recruitments, and selective murder of civilians. American journalists have published many accounts by witnesses who say they have seen atrocities committed by the FDN.[**] In its latest report, Amnesty International states:

> While some prisoners were reportedly taken to bases outside Nicaragua by opposition forces, the forces of the FDN were more frequently reported to retain no prisoners, killing captives on the spot or after brief field interrogation. In some areas they reportedly killed their captive before the assembled residents of target communities.

The FDN's spokesmen have acknowledged some of these abuses, but its leaders have yet to show that they have an effective mechanism for monitoring the behavior of the soldiers who commit them (Last autumn one FDN officer was released from command after executing three Sandinista prisoners and the FDN now says he will be tried. It also announced in November that sixty officers were being trained to monitor human-rights abuses.) They argue that indiscriminate terror against civilians would be inconsistent with the FDN's rapid growth, although it is of course possible for both selective terror against supporters of the Sandinistas and recruitment of those who oppose them to take place at the same time. The Sandinista army, the FDN and Miskito leaders say, deliberately endangers noncombatants through "civilian shielding"—mixing

[*] *The New York Times* (March 24, 1985), page 11.

[**] See Americas Watch, "Violations of the Law of War by Both Sides in Nicaragua," (March 1985 and June 1985); Organization of American States, "Annual Report of the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights, 1983-1984"; "Report on the Situation of Human Rights of a Segment of the Nicaraguan Population of Miskito Origin" (October 1983); Reports of the Nicaraguan Permanent Commission on Human Rights (June 1984-January 1985); Amnesty International, *Nicaragua, the Human Rights Record*, to be published in March 1986. Americas Watch asserts that "while both sides have committed serious violations of the laws of war, there has been a sharp decline in government abuses." A lengthy firsthand investigative report in *The Atlanta Constitution* (April 28, 1985) raised questions about the methodology of the recent human-rights reports and reported large-scale human-rights violations by the Nicaraguan government.

Both sides appear to be guilty of indiscriminately placing land mines.

10.

What explains Nicaragua's descent into violence? Unlike Guatemala and El Salvador, Nicaragua has in the past been largely free of death squads and unchecked mass violence, except in the later years of Somoza. Part of the explanation, certainly, lies in the desire for revenge on the part of former guardsmen in the FDN and the willingness of the CIA and the Reagan administration to sponsor such forces, which they have been unable or unwilling to control. But from former government officials, among others, we learn that the Sandinistas' own actions have also helped to create the climate of violence. Jorge Alonzo Pinell, the Sandinistas' representative to the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva between 1980 and 1982, and now in exile in Paris, has described, in his book *Nicaragua*, two massacres in which a total of 130 former guardsmen who were held in detention were killed before 1981. The Lawyers Committee on International Human Rights

has documented abuses by the Sandinista "Popular tribunals," such as intimidation of witnesses and defense lawyers and "coercive forms of interrogation."

A recent Sandinista defector trained in police methods in Moscow, Alvaro Baldizon, estimates that two thousand Nicaraguans have been kidnapped, tortured, or executed by Sandinista authorities since the revolution. Baldizon charges that in late 1981 Tomás Borge approved a secret plan for "special measures"—i.e., assassinations—to be carried out by small squads of no more than five persons against low- and mid-level opposition activists, peasants judged sympathetic to the rebels, captured prisoners, and Miskito Indians. When I interviewed Baldizon he told me that he personally knew of some six hundred such special assassinations. He claimed he had verified the existence of clandestine cemeteries for "special measures" victims in two war zones.

Baldizon served as a special investigator in Borge's Ministry of Interior. He says that Borge, concerned by queries from international human-rights organizations about missing Nicaraguans that often implicated his ministry, and fearful of losing support from friendly Latin American and European governments, set up a special investigations committee in December 1982, to which Baldizon was assigned. According to Baldizon, 90 percent of the allegations against Sandinista security forces from the families of victims proved accurate. In June 1983 Baldizon fled to Honduras with a large folder of official committee documents containing information on the committee's handling of the cases it considered. The documents include accounts of investigations of numerous executions and disappearances and a memo from an officer of the special investigation committee referring to "special measures."

On December 3, Americas Watch, which

[illegible] raising many questions, particularly about the number of executions in reports and about what Americas Watch regards as discrepancies in its statements. Americas Watch director Aryeh Neier believes that

> some of Baldizon's information is accurate, and it certainly should be further investigated, as we are trying to do. So far, we find his claim that, to his knowledge, the Sandinistas have killed six hundred civilians inconsistent with the information compiled by the anti-Sandinista Permanent Commission for Human Rights in Managua, the OAS's Latin American Commission on Human Rights, as well as Americas Watch. These organizations have reported information on approximately three hundred killings and disappearances of civilians carried out by the Sandinistas, apart from combat, since 1980.

Baldizon showed me the draft of a point-by-point reply. According to him, the apparent discrepancy is explained by the widespread fear among Nicaraguans of reprisals by the pervasive security apparatus when they make denunciations to human-rights organizations. The issues between Baldizon and Americas Watch are still to be resolved. His story remains deeply disturbing, however, especially since he was in a position to learn of executions and other abuses that could have remained unknown to the human-rights organizations.

Another disturbing account comes from Mario Guerrero, former executive director of the National Commission for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, a man who worked closely with organizations like Amnesty International. Guerrero says that in late 1984 Alejandro Bendana, the secretary general of the Nicaraguan Foreign Ministry, told him his organization should stop investigating complaints of Nicaraguans and act instead as "an arm of Nicaraguan foreign policy," devoting itself to denouncing "contra" abuses. Guerrero "could not stand lying any more," so he defected.

Guerrero told me he was looking into the case of a "disappeared" farm worker named Ramon Ordonez Ramirez who, he discovered, notwithstanding government denials, had been held in state prison and probably mistreated. (In Washington Guerrero was told by Baldizon that Ordonez had been assassinated, one of the last "special measures" cases Baldizon investigated in May 1985.) When the government published a statement that Ordonez had been freed, the Ordonez family blamed Guerrero for complicity with the government's lies. Press accounts of Guerrero's own findings on Ordonez's treatment had been censored. Later, Guerrero says, he was harassed and threatened by Sandinista groups for being "a defender of Somocistas." The FSLN, meanwhile, accused him of concealing Sandinista atrocities and broadcast notices of his physical description and whereabouts. "For discovering certain irregularities, I was now in jeopardy both from the Sandinistas and the counterrevolution."

Just as an increasing number of Nicaraguans are caught in the cross fire of widening civil war, so too the American public is caught in a bitter propaganda war over Nicaragua. In a final article, I will consider America's own entanglement and the bleak prospects for any settlement of the conflict. □

The Nicaraguan Tangle

Robert S. Leiken

1.

Nicaragua's 1979 insurrection was called the "beautiful revolution." It united the people against the corrupt Somoza dictatorship and promised a "third way" between neocolonial nationalist exploitation and the Cuban model of socialism. Today, the "new Nicaragua" is mired in a financial war equipped and financed by the superpowers, while its national aspirations languish. The movement of the Sandinistas toward closer relations with the Soviet Union has left many of their international supporters either publicly critical or else privately embarrassed; some now concentrate on the aggressive policies of the Reagan administration and the "contra" forces it is backing rather than directly defend the revolutionary government.

The Nicaraguan elections in 1984 were central to what has happened since, yet they remain poorly understood. They seemed to present a promising opportunity. The revolution could recover its democratic legitimacy, the people would have a chance to approve or reject Sandinista leadership and arrive at national reconciliation. But the "first free election in Nicaraguan history" bore a strong resemblance to those conducted by the Somoza dynasty. They marked only a pause in the civil war, and another episode in the contest between Moscow and Washington. After the elections, the number of Nicaraguan rebels increased, the war grew more intense, and the superpowers stepped up their involvement in it. After six years of Sandinista rule, Nicaragua was more entangled with outside powers than ever before.

There was a moment last summer when independent Nicaraguans tried to intervene in the electoral contest. On August 5, 1984 in Chinandega, thousands came to a rally in support of Arturo Cruz, the opposition candidate. The Sandinistas dispatched a mob to disrupt the meeting, and the independent newspaper *La Prensa* was prohibited from publishing reports of what had happened in Chinandega. After that the contest between the Sandinistas and the opposition turned into a protracted and largely secret series of negotiations conducted by politicians and diplomats. These with the least to say in the matter were Nicaragua's voters. The Sandinistas' advertised "first free elections in Nicaraguan history" joined the long, inglorious line of Central American "demonstration elections"[1] – a tradition founded by the United States in the earlier part of the century.

For the last decade the Sandinistas have relied on their ability to reconcile their private plans with their public image, and their ideology with domestic and geopolitical realities. Nicaragua is a country of many small businessmen, a large but impoverished petite bourgeoisie, a deeply religious peasantry, and a tiny proletariat in a region in which the United States is the predominant power and in which, except among some of the intelligentsia and young people, the Cuban revolution is held in low regard. Democratic aspirations run deep. The Sandinistas, to gain domestic and international support against Somoza in the spring of 1979, made, as Comandante Bayardo Arce said last May, "three promises that made us internationally presentable and that were manageable for us from a revolutionary standpoint: nonalignment, mixed economy, and political pluralism."

The same promises were also central to the skillful and flexible policy of the moderate Sandinistas – the Terceristas – who became the internationally prominent leaders of the alliance that brought down Somoza. That alliance included the Catholic Church, most Nicaraguan businessmen, a variety of labor leaders, liberals, social and Christian democrats, communists, and *La Prensa*. The 1979 insurrection was mainly an urban struggle made possible by new social forces that were unleashed by thirty years of sustained growth. As export agriculture became modernized, dispossessed peasants flocked to urban shantytowns, labor unions were organized, and from a rapidly growing student population arose not only radical activists but a technocratic and commercial middle class stifled by Somoza's dynastic rule. Indeed, the Nicaraguan revolution was set off by the assassination of Pedro Joaquín Chamorro, editor of *La Prensa* and the leader of the broad-based coalition named UDEL – not by any action of the Sandinistas, whose forces had languished for years in the northern mountains.[2]

For Daniel Ortega, who was elected president on November 4, and for the other commanders, participation in the broad alliance was from the first "tactical and temporary," as was stated in the 1977 "General Platform" of the Terceristas. In 1977, Ortega's brother Humberto, a leader of the "moderate" Tercerista faction and now defense minister, identified the "civic bourgeois opposition" to Somoza as a "momentary force" – in the same category, he said, as Somoza's followers and Yankee imperialists.

Within six months after taking power the Sandinistas succeeded in removing their unreliable revolutionary partners from the most important cabinet posts. In May 1980 the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) stacked the quasi-legislative Council of State with its own supporters, leading to prominent democrats – Alfonso Robelo and Violeta Chamorro – to resign from the five-person revolutionary junta.[3]

During the year and a half before Ronald Reagan took office, the Sandinistas turned to the Soviet bloc for help in building a large military force, in setting up a tight internal security apparatus, and in training large numbers of party, government, and military personnel.

In 1981 the regime intensified press censorship and stepped up its harassment of the political opposition, independent trade unions, Miskito Indians, and the Church. Expropriations of the property of many non-Somocistas, official corruption, mismanagement of public enterprises ranging from the coffee processors to the national airline, and unsound agricultural commodity pricing estranged hitherto generous lending institutions such as the World Bank. The Reagan administration did its best to encourage this estrangement. Then in November 1981 the Reagan administration began to equip and train counterrevolutionary groups – a decision that for many transformed Nicaragua's internal conflict into one between Washington and Managua. But well before the contras became a significant military force, political and economic discontent was already creating its own recruits for counterrevolution. Factories were closing, such as those making textiles and metal products; peasants were balking at imposed state purchases; the supply of foreign exchange and imported industrial goods had been dwindling, and consumer goods had become scarce.

These developments were seized on by hard-liners in Washington, especially in the CIA and the National Security Council, who were determined from the outset to cripple and ultimately destroy the Sandinista regime. And indeed, US support of armed insurgents greatly contributed to Nicaragua's economic difficulties, fostered a siege mentality among the Sandinistas, and provided an excuse for a military buildup and internal repression in Nicaragua.

By 1983, the Nicaraguan economy was in serious trouble and the country was on a war footing. The Soviet Union was willing to furnish oil and counterinsurgency weapons but not to resolve the economic

[1] See Edward S. Herman and Frank Brodhead, *Demonstration Elections: U.S.-Staged Elections in the Dominican Republic, Vietnam and El Salvador* (South End Press, 1984).

[2] A former high Sandinista government official who left Nicaragua in 1984, Jorge Alonso Pinell, said that the relative popular support of UDEL and the FSLN was demonstrated by the fact that Chamorro's assassination set off widespread demonstrations and strikes while "no death of a Sandinista leader provoked so any more similar reactions." He cites Humberto Ortega's admission that the Sandinistas were unable to lead the mass movement at that time "because we did not have enough cadre." See Pinell's book, *Nicaragua* (Costa Rica: Koinos, 1985).

[3] One of the early acts of the reformed Council was to postpone the elections until 1985. In February 1984, the Council announced that elections would take place on November 4, 1984.

ctatic or provide guarantees of Nicaragua's security. The favorable US domestic reaction to the intervention in Grenada chastened the Sandinistas' confidence in the strength of political opposition in the US to an invasion of Nicaragua. They then turned for support to Western Europe and Latin America – only to find that there, too, their prestige had deteriorated.

Closer to home, El Salvador's guerrillas, on whom the Sandinistas had counted to provide them with a "geopolitical shield," were making little progress, and many of the Salvadoran insurgent leaders with whom I spoke blamed the Sandinistas' ultraleft policies for their difficulties in winning non-Marxist backing. Nicaragua's increasingly radical politics, together with the Reagan administration's pressures, also helped to shift the center of political gravity to the right in Costa Rica and Honduras, further isolating the Sandinistas. Within Nicaragua itself, both armed and peaceful opposition was growing. The decision to institute compulsory military service in the fall of 1983 was vastly unpopular. I interviewed three hundred Nicaraguans from many different occupations and political groups during two recent visits and most of them told me that they had become fed up with the regime.

In these circumstances, many Sandinista leaders came to see elections, promised grudgingly in 1979, as convenient, even welcome. "Elections are a nuisance as are a lot of things which make up the reality of the revolution," daysdo Arce, one of the most powerful comandantes, said during a meeting last May with the Marxist-Leninist Nicaraguan Socialist party (PSN), of which he represented the Sandinista National Directorate. "If it were not for the state of war forced on us, elections would be absolutely inappropriate." Arce said, confuting the widespread opinion that military pressure had prevented the Sandinistas from fulfilling their commitments to pluralism. What is needed, he continued, are not "bourgeois formalisms but the dictatorship of the proletariat." "Nonetheless," he argued, these "bourgeois details" can become "arms of the revolution," in the same way as it has been "useful, for example, to be able to point to entrepreneurial class and private production in a mixed economy while we get on with our strategic goals."[1]

Along with Tomás Borge, Bayardo Arce is a leader of the radical faction of the Sandinista party, the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN). Today's factional struggle dates back to the mid-1970s when Jaime Wheelock led a small group of younger Sandinistas into the "Proletarian Tendency." Wheelock resisted the Sandinistas to organize without delay "a vanguard party" based on the urban proletariat. The Sandinista old guard, led by Tomás Borge and Henry Ruiz, favored "accumulating forces" in the countryside, and Gary Prado, known as the Prolonged People's War (PPP) tendency. In 1977, a third "tendency" (hence "Terceristá"), led by Humberto and Daniel Ortega, seemed to break with the doctrinaire positions of Wheelock and Borge and began to organize a broad national alliance to prepare for an insurrection. Yet the 1977 "General Platform" of the Terceristas did not question the common Sandinista objective of Cuban-style socialism but argued against announcing this "in an open way."

The divisions among the Sandinistas gave rise to fierce recriminations, and they accused one another of being "petit bourgeois," "Anglophobes," and "CIA agents." Unlike the Salvadoran revolutionary groups during the 1970s, the Sandinistas steered clear of the fundamental ideological debates then taking place in the international communist movement. The Sandinistas argued about tactics for gaining power, but ever when to do once they took power. In Havana in March 1979 the three groups were formally reunited.[2]

Little more than a year before the final offensive in 1979, the total number of militants in the three factions was probably less than three hundred. When the Sandinistas gained power, the three tendencies, now no longer those of small marginal groups, began to struggle over the spoils and instruments of power. The divisions among the Sandinistas have often produced puzzling and self-destructive policies. Many observers attribute the Sandinistas' failure to hold elections during the first several months after coming to power, when their popularity was at its height, to an inability to unite behind a candidate. Sharp infighting between the moderates and the hard-liners also preceded Daniel Ortega's nominal approval as the party's presidential candidate in July 1984.

In his talk to the Nicaraguan Socialist party in May 1984, Arce made it clear to his "fellow communists," as he called them, that the Nicaraguan elections were designed from the beginning to appeal to Western liberals, especially congressional Democrats, European social democrats, and the Contadora countries. Elections would enable the FSLN to "disarm the international bourgeoisie" and perpetuate the "internal contradiction of the United States."[3]

Arce argued that the international demand for elections could be turned to the Sandinistas' domestic advantage:

> Imperialism demands three things of us: to abandon internationalism, to abandon our strategic ties with the Soviet Union ... and to be democratic ...
>
> We cannot cease to be internationalists without ceasing to be revolutionaries. We cannot cease our strategic relationships without ceasing to be revolutionaries. ...
>
> But the superstructural aspects, so-called democracy, bourgeois democracy, have something that we can manage and even profit from for socialist construction.

He went on to explain that elections could "legitimate" the construction of a "Red Constitution." By approving of the elections, social democrats and liberals would, in Arce's words, provide "the arms" for "terminating this whole artifice of pluralism" which has been useful up to now, but has reached its end."

"The artifice of pluralism" was a telling phrase. After the American Marines occupied Nicaragua in 1912, the US now and then sponsored "free elections" while building up the Nicaraguan National Guard under Anastasio Somoza and helping it to suppress the rebels led by Augusto Sandino. The last Somoza, Anastasio Somoza Debayle, a West Point graduate who spoke English better than his native Spanish, also staged elections while monopolizing political power. He fattened a public but impotent opposition, censored the press, and enriched himself with international earthquake relief funds.

The 1979 Sandinista revolution was supposed to end all this. Nicaragua was to be free from plunderers, from corruption and "national betrayal," from foreign domination, and democracy. But this was not to be. After four years of Sandinista rule and three of Reagan's, Somoza and the big powers cast long shadows over Nicaragua's future.

2.

In July of 1983, Daniel Ortega, on behalf of the governing junta, invited Arturo Cruz to return to Nicaragua for conversations. "Daniel was stumbling my becoming the opposition's presidential candidate – credible but weak," Cruz believed. A former member of the Sandinista junta, then its ambassador to the United States, Cruz broke with the Sandinistas in November 1981 in protest against what he called the increasingly repressive methods of the ruling Sandinista National Directorate.

As a young man Cruz participated in two unsuccessful coups against Somoza and was imprisoned by him. Later he worked with Pedro Joaquín Chamorro, the leader of UDEL, the "bourgeois" civic opposition movement. The UDEL coalition included trade unions, opposition parties, among them the Nicaraguan Socialist party, as well as business, student groups, and community organizations. When the Terceristas formed "The Twelve" – a group of prestigious Nicaraguans created to legitimize the armed struggle – the FSLN considered Cruz a natural for membership. Even today Cruz still has, as he told me, "a hang up on the Sandinistas." "I came to admire them because they fought bravely, risking their lives against the Somoza tyranny."

When Cruz broke with the Sandinistas, he returned to his previous job with the Inter-American Development Bank in Washington. The Sandinistas later made much of this in order to portray Cruz as "Washington's candidate." But if he had anyone's support in Washington, it was not the Reagan administration's. In fact, he said repeatedly that the administration's militaristic policies were making things more difficult for the beleaguered political opposition in Nicaragua.

The opposition – a loosely organized coalition of political parties, trade unions, and business organizations called the Coordinadora, the short name for the National Democratic Coordinator (CDN) – was at a disadvantage in challenging the Sandinistas. The FSLN controlled the cabinet, the state security apparatus, and the army; the military, the police, state TV, and radio. The local block committees (the Sandinista Defense Committees – CDS) in charge of such basic functions as ration cards, mail, and applications for public jobs and housing, had become extensions of the Sandinista party. Opposition groups had been forbidden to hold outdoor rallies since early 1981; political and trade union activists were frequently detained or imprisoned, and opposition offices were attacked by Sandinista mobs called turbas; pamphlets and newspapers were confiscated. The Sandinistas encouraged people loyal to them to join the opposition parties and trade unions and form factions with them.

In November 1983 the traditional anti-Somoza Democratic Conservative party split apart. The government declared that the party could be legally represented only by a minority faction that agreed to participate in the elections under the Sandinistas' ground rules. The rest of the party, the majority, was stripped of its legal status despite demands from other parties that a party assembly be held to determine which faction held the majority.

The Coordinadora was itself torn by internal disputes. It had gradually come under mass media censors, and in general the "cleaning of an image" aimed at establishing a bond between the candidates and the [US] public. The document, "Promotional Strategy for the FSLN Electoral Campaign," was obtained by an editor of *La Prensa* after the elections.

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[1] Arce's secret speech was printed in the Spanish newspaper *La Vanguardia* on July 31, 1984 and has recently been republished in full in Douglas W. Payne's *The Democratic Mask: The Consolidation of the Sandinista Revolution* (Freedom House, 1985). Sandinista authorities have acknowledged the speech and FSLN officials confirm its authenticity.

[2] For further discussion of the divisions among the Sandinistas see David Nolan's *The Ideology of the Sandinistas and the Nicaraguan Revolution* (University of Miami Press, 1984); Jorge Alonso Pinell, *Nicaragua* (Costa Rica Kosmos, 1985), Plutarco Hernandez, *El FSLN Por Dentro* (Costa Rica: 1982); Humberto Ortega "Nicaragua – The Strategy of Victory," an interview published in *Sandinista Speak*, edited by Bruce Marcus (Pathfinder, 1982); Carlos Fonseca Amador, "Notas sobre algunos problemas de hoy" (March 1976), published as an appendix to Hernandez's book cited above; "La Crisis Interna y los Tendencias," the position of the Proletarian Tendency, published in *Colección Cuarto de Abril* (Managua, 1978). Interviews with Humberto Ortega and Henry Ruiz appear in the first issue of the magazine *Nicaráuac*, published by the Ministry of Culture in May–June 1980. All the listed articles and statements will appear in *The Central American Crisis Reader*, edited by Robert Leiken and Barry Rubin, to be published by Summer Books in 1986.

[3] An internal FSLN party document stated: "Our objective is to make our electoral campaign become a factor in the United States electoral campaign. We can do that only by literally 'invading' the United States media" through daily press conferences, organization of foreign press visits, "trips by leaders of the revolution for purposes of influencing opinion about the election," coordination with "Solidarity committees," articles written under the leaders' names for the

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In April Cruz acknowledged having accepted a "retainer for academic work," from a foundation that, he said, he later learned received CIA funding. However,

Cruz claims he remained his political independence, citing his continued public criticism of the policies of the Reagan administration.

to include most of the UDEL and other groups that had opposed Somoza but then came to oppose the Sandinistas as well. Its right wing was dominated by the landholders of the old anti-Somoza Conservative party and the leaders of the business council (COSEP). On the left were three groups: the Social Christians (reform-minded Christian Democrats who are close to the Catholic hierarchy), the "progressive" Conservatives (many of whom admired Cruz), and a militant anti-Somoza labor federation composed mainly of stevedores and factory workers. In the center was another labor federation, representing skilled workers, truckers, and independent tradesmen, and the small Constitutional Liberal and Social Democratic parties. The Sandinistas' decision to hold elections put this fragile coalition under great strain.

The older Conservative party politicians and some of the more prominent business leaders, for example, were by now convinced that only force could move the Sandinistas – preferably American invasion. They were in touch with leaders of the largest group of *contras* – the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN), which had been trained and financed by the CIA. The leaders of the FDN, along with hard-liners in the National Security Council and the CIA, encouraged the right wing of the Coordinadora to believe that Arturo Cruz was a potential "*sandunista*," the term that had been used for those who, for a price, had collaborated in Somoza's staged elections. They reminded them that Cruz's aim, as he wrote in *Foreign Affairs* in 1983, was to "moderate," not to "challenge Sandinista power," and that he favored "dissidence," not "counter-revolution." When he was in the Sandinista government and after he quit, Cruz wrote, he wanted to "reconcile the revolutionary family," and he spoke [illegible]

But after several weeks of bickering, the CDN nominated Cruz on July 20, 1984, three days before he returned to Managua from Washington. The right wing of the CDN still distrusted Cruz but reluctantly agreed that he would be the most popular candidate the opposition could present. The CDN's delay in nominating Cruz left him little more than a week to hold public meetings. The Sandinistas, still at that time anxious to have Cruz take part in the elections on their own terms, agreed to extend the registration period until August 5 to provide the time for negotiating the conditions under which the CDN would participate in the campaign. If the CDN did not register by August 5, the government said, it would be allowed only to hold meetings indoors with active CDN members.

In December 1983 the CDN had stated nine conditions for their participation in the election. These included demands for separation of the state and the FSLN party, respect for human rights, lifting the February 1982 state of emergency, an amnesty law, trade union and religious freedom, judicial independence, and legal safeguards such as *habeas corpus*. They also called for a "national dialogue" among all Nicaraguan factions including the armed opposition. Such a "dialogue" – the word has become central to Central American politics – would recognize that those who took part in it had a legitimate place in Nicaragua's future. Cruz put emphasis on the last point, and it was on this issue that talks with the Sandinistas broke down on August 3.

The FSLN claimed that the CDN, by insisting on the legitimacy of the rebels, would be using the elections to promote the war against the government. Some in the CDN – especially the Social Christians and the unions – wanted to take part in a political contest that could begin to democratize Nicaragua. They were caught between implacable extremes – the Sandinista hard-liners, with Cuban and Soviet backing, and the CDN right, with its friends supported by the CIA. Those with guns had the most powerful patrons.

The CDN right wing may well have supported the demand for talks with the rebels while expecting it to be rejected. For Cruz the demand for talks was consistent with his support of the two attempts by the rebel Commander Eden Pastora to reach a political settlement between 1982 and 1984, as well as with the position of the Nicaraguan bishops in their appeal of April 1984. Cruz also found the demand consistent with the proposals of the Contadora group for "national reconciliation." But, in view of the Sandinistas' categorical rejection of talks, the CDN's demand appeared quixotic at best and, at worst, an attempt to discredit the elections. In thus proved to be a political blunder, permitting the Sandinistas to brand the CDN a "*contra* front." As Daniel Ortega put it, the CDN's program confused the minimum conditions for participation in elections (such as freedom of the press, absence of harassment, access to the public media, guarantees of personal safety), etc.) with issues that belonged in the CDN's campaign platform.

Before the date for Cruz's registration had passed, the CDN, despite threats from the police, organized a series of rallies throughout Nicaragua. These came to a climax on August 5 at the rally in the historically pro-Sandinista city of Chinandega. Several thousand people turned out to support Cruz. A mob of *turbas* organized by the Sandinistas disrupted the Chinandega meeting. A public surge of support for the opposition did not figure in the Sandinistas' electoral plans and they prohibited *La Prensa* from publishing reports from Chinandega. Had the news of what took place in Chinandega reached Nicaraguans in other cities, they might have been emboldened to do likewise. The memory of what happened in Chinandega remained during the rest of the contest between the FSLN and the CDN – as a promise for some, and a menace for others.

Cruz won the next round in what, after Chinandega, became a diplomatic struggle with the FSLN, conducted behind closed doors. In late August he was officially received by the presidents of Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Costa Rica, and El Salvador. That he was welcome in Venezuela, whose ruling Accion Democratica is the largest Latin American party in the Socialist International, underscored the desire of leading Latin American social democrats to have him included in the elections. President Belisario Betancur of Colombia, the de facto leader of the Contadora group – which includes Mexico, Colombia, Panama, and Venezuela – accepted Cruz's proposal that he mediate the conflict over the elections. Now Cruz became central to any evaluation of the elections' legitimacy. By September, the presidents of the neighboring democracies were in effect telling Cruz "You were right not to register – at least some of your conditions for participation are valid." From September on, Betancur and the Socialist International were continually trying to act as brokers in a deal between the Sandinistas and the opposition.

Last December, looking back on the events before the election, Betancur told me, "It was obvious that Contadora's fate might well hinge on the Nicaraguan elections. Peace not only in Nicaragua but in the whole region was at stake." He organized in the Sandinistas that representative elections were their "best defense against any possible US intervention" and perhaps the only way to head off a civil war into which Costa Rica and Honduras were already being drawn. The Contadora group was then negotiating an agreement to limit arms and troop levels in Central America as well as military installations and exercises, foreign bases and advisers, and support for insurgents. But many in Costa Rica, Honduras, and El Salvador regarded an effective political opposition in Nicaragua as a guarantee of their own security. They were unlikely to sign the Contadora agreement without such a safeguard. Thus Betancur told me he was prepared not only to mediate but to be "blunt with the FSLN" and to urge Cruz "to be flexible."

In early September, along with Betancur and the "Latin" members of the Socialist International (including Spain and Portugal), a number of prominent democrats including House Majority Leader Jim Wright, Senator Edward Kennedy, Representative Michael Barnes and House Deputy Whip William Alexander telephoned Sandinista leaders, urging them to make a deal that would bring Cruz into the elections. In mid-September the Sandinistas agreed to reopen the candidate registration period, void the outlawing of the CDN political parties, and allow the CDN more time on the radio and television. Now the main sticking point was the CDN's request to postpone the elections. The CDN argued that the remaining six weeks before the elections was insufficient for them to mount a national campaign. At a minimum the CDN wanted Cruz to appear one Sunday in the capital of each of Nicaragua's sixteen departments, and some are in remote regions.

On Wednesday, September 19, President Betancur telephoned Cruz to tell him that the Sandinista candidate for vice-president, Sergio Ramirez, had promised postponement of the election. Cruz replied that this was good news, the bad news, he told Betancur, was that after a small indoor meeting in Leon he and other CDN leaders had just been attacked physically by two thousand *turbas*. They had hit Cruz with a stone, spat on him, and pulled his hair. Later that same week Daniel Ortega said "We are not ashamed to be *turbas*, because to be part of the *turba* is to be part of the people." The literature distributed by the government to election observers portrayed the attacks as a "spontaneous popular repudiation" of Cruz's candidacy. Residents of Masaya told me, however, that a subsequent attack on a Cruz meeting in that city was carried out by outsiders trucked in by the government.

Like Betancur, Brent Budowsky, Representative Alexander's legislative aide, also received word that the elections would be postponed. However, on September 21, Comandante Tomás Borge, a leader of the radical faction, returned from a three-week visit to several Soviet bloc countries. At the airport he declared that "it would be wrong to postpone the elections." Borge went directly to a meeting of the Sandinista National Directorate in which, according to rumors circulating in Managua, a harsh dispute erupted between radicals and moderates. The directorate announced they would not postpone the elections but would sign a draft of the Contadora treaty instead.

The Reagan administration quickly denounced the signing as "hypocritical," thus managing to appear hypocritical itself since it claimed to be supporting the efforts of the Contadora group. However, some Contadora leaders – as well as some Democrats in Congress – were also wary. They noticed that the Sandinistas

signing of the draft was conditioned on its not being amended by other Central American countries, and that, in any event, it could not go into effect before November 12, that is, after the elections. Thus the Nicaraguan elections would not be bound by the Contadora treaty's requirement of "impartial elections" to include "all representative currents of opinion." In simultaneously signing the draft and postponing the elections, the Sandinistas again appeared to be trying to fend off pressures for internal democracy with clever public relations.

During the next week, between September 24 and 28, Sandinista officials attempted to convince congressional Democrats that Cruz was to blame for the breakdown in negotiations. Congress was about to reconsider aid to the *contras*, and the Sandinistas wanted to encourage opposition. At this point the CDN blundered again, proposing that the elections be postponed until February 24. The Sandinistas immediately claimed that this was evidence of the CDN's bad faith. When Budowsky asked Cruz about this, Cruz told him that the February date was open to negotiation and that mid-January would be acceptable. Budowsky then told this to the Sandinista authorities. Nonetheless, Budowsky later recalled to me, "the Sandinistas spent the next five or six days telling everybody that February 24 was Cruz's answer, and that it was nonnegotiable. I began to question the good faith of the Sandinistas."

On September 30, members of the Socialist International met in Rio de Janeiro. The leaders of the southern or Latin wing, including the Socialist International's vice-president Carlos Andres Perez of Venezuela, President Mario Soares of Portugal, and Elena Flores of the ruling Spanish Socialist Workers' party, arranged a meeting between Bayardo Arce and Cruz and other members of the CDN. President Betancur was in close touch by telephone.

After four long sessions, an agreement in principle was reached on October 2. The Sandinistas made a key concession – they would postpone the election if Cruz yielded to several of their demands. Cruz agreed to ask the insurgents to declare a cease-fire and to surrender their arms to international authorities. The Sandinistas knew this would put the CDN in a difficult position. By succeeding with the *contras*, the CDN could be portrayed as behind to them. Moreover, Cruz also agreed that if the *contras* did not lay down their arms, the elections would take place November 4 as scheduled.

Cruz had not come to Rio expecting to negotiate. Since he was not authorized to do so, he told me, he had to consult by telephone with his colleagues in Managua. Daniel Ortega, then touring the US to publicize his candidacy, told several newspaper editors that the Sandinistas had tapped the opposition's phones and were aware that the CDN right wing was reluctant to accept the Rio conditions. By the same means, the Sandinistas also learned that officials in the CIA were urging the rightists in the CDN to torpedo the Rio agreements.

Bayardo Arce seemed startled when Cruz accepted the demands. A member of the Socialist International who was present at the meeting told me, "On Tuesday, October 2 at 5:00 PM everything appeared to be settled. Suddenly at 5:40 Arce got up and walked out." Arce announced to a press conference that Cruz's request to return to Managua to get the CDN's agreement was unacceptable. Some European socialists at Rio found Arce's attitude inexplicable. "If," one of them told me, "Cruz is unable to get the CDN to sign on, why not let him return and try? If he failed, the Sandinistas would be vindicated. Do the Sandinistas fear the CDN?" In fact, when Cruz returned to Managua he did obtain, after one stormy meeting, the CDN's approval.

If the Sandinistas feared Cruz, their fear was not of losing the election – they controlled the electoral process too tightly – but of "two, three, many Chamorros" a wave of support that could elude Sandinista control and reveal the erosion of the FSLN's popular backing. By tying Cruz's hands in Rio, the hardliners in the Reagan administration, working through its allies in the CDN, provided the Sandinistas a convenient way out of the impasse.

Arce's walkout caused considerable consternation among the members of the Socialist International. This led Willy Brandt, the Socialist International president, to ask both parties to return to the negotiations, and he offered to travel to Nicaragua to "mediate" the conversations.

There was consternation in Washington as well. Budowsky told me, "The Sandinistas wouldn't accept their own offer as soon as it seemed that Cruz's people would. We are talking about stopping a war, about a democratic election, about the Contadora process, about the future of a country. All this was not worth a three-day wait."

The next week Congress was to vote on covert action. A number of Democrats decided against pushing for a complete cutoff of funds to the *contras* in order to maintain pressure on the Sandinistas to negotiate. But when Congress voted to suspend covert action, with renewal subject to approval both by the House and the Senate, the Sandinistas were cheered, and their position continued to harden.

Betancur told me that he still hoped that "we could work out something" at the inauguration of the new Panamanian president on October 11. Cruz wanted with Socialist International leaders and President Betancur to meet with Daniel Ortega in Panama, but Ortega never arrived, he sent instead the FSLN candidate for vice-president, Sergio Ramirez, who told SI officials that Brandt should not "meddle in our internal affairs." When he got to Managua Brandt made no effort to mediate at all. He pronounced the elections "a positive step" and left.

While international attention was concentrated on the duel between Cruz and the Sandinistas, the six small registered opposition parties mounted vituperative campaigns. Three of these parties are Marxist-Leninist, the most important being the Nicaraguan Socialist party (PSN), which formerly had open support from the Soviet Union. The Popular Social Christian party and the Conservative Democratic party were originally pro-FSLN factions, but many of their activists became estranged from the Sandinistas because of harassment during the campaign. The Independent Liberal party (PLI), which included a pro-FSLN faction, had a larger following. The PLI was led by Virgilio Godoy, the former labor minister who quit the government in April 1984. When the parties registered for the elections it announced that it would withdraw if the Sandinistas did not keep their promises to restore the rights of freedom of movement and expression.

After the attacks on Cruz's indoor meetings in September were reported in the international press, the *turbas* were restrained. Nonetheless, the registered opposition parties continued to complain that party activists were being harassed and jailed, and that the Sandinistas were not keeping their promises. They charged that the FSLN was using state resources and the CDS (which controlled not only food rations but travel visas and eligibility for public housing and employment) for its campaign and that the electoral council was not providing the opposition with their share of internationally donated campaign supplies (paper, ink, paints, etc.) They also claimed that legislation lowering the voting age to sixteen, combined with Sandinista control of the army and militias, provided the FSLN with a captive voting bloc.*

Nonetheless, the Sandinistas allowed these parties to run campaigns denouncing Sandinista abuses and corruption. They deplored the numerous former Somocistas in the leadership of the CDS, and named a good many of them. They claimed that Sandinista mismanagement of the economy had turned Nicaragua, in Godoy's words, into "the country of *no hay*" ("there isn't any"). Opposition candidates denounced the draft for "obligating Nicaraguan youth to fight for a party, not for their country." Some charged that the Sandinistas were reproducing "Somoza-style elections" in which the opposition could make noise but had no chance of winning.

On October 21, by a four-to-one margin, Godoy's PLI voted to pull out of the election for "lack of minimum conditions." Godoy told me that party campaign workers had been harassed and arrested and that the Sandinistas failed to fulfill their promise of "freedom of the press, of movement and assembly, and [honoring] the rights of Address campaign and injunction." But *La Prensa* was stopped from publishing news of PLI's withdrawal. Godoy told me later that though the PLI suspended all publicity, "suddenly there were more PLI advertisements than ever before" in the pro-government press, radio, and TV. The Supreme Election Council upheld the PLI's minority, saying it was too late to reprint the ballots. Godoy then announced he was participating "under duress."

The elections at this point presented an odd spectacle: one opposition candidate, Cruz, couldn't get in, and another, Godoy, couldn't get out. But the Reagan administration's ineptness succeeded in obscuring what was actually happening. Two days before the PLI voted to withdraw, the American ambassador to Nicaragua, Harry E. Bergold, following State Department orders, paid a visit to Godoy to restate the US position that the elections were not representative. Bergold, a senior US diplomat told me, felt the State Department's instructions were unwise. Godoy is well known in Nicaragua as a radical critic of the US, and the ambassador's visit did much to help the Sandinistas disparage his reputation. Once again Washington and Managua seemed, in effect, to be working hand in hand.

On October 28, the Democratic Conservatives were also on the verge of voting to withdraw. Several dozen young Sandinistas broke up the party's convention. Shortly thereafter the other non-Marxist opposition party, the Popular Social Christians, voted to participate only "provisionally," proposing new elections "within a year." Only the Marxist-Leninist parties took part in the elections unconditionally, and one of them, as we shall see, had serious reservations.

The banning of Cruz, the coercion of the registered opposition, press censorship, attacks by *turbas* – all these produced an unfavorable impression overseas. Colombia's President Betancur told me he had shown his "disappointment" by declining to send official government observers. Indeed, none of the Contadora countries sent official observers. Nor did any of the Europeans, except for the Dutch.

3.

What happened on Sunday, November 4? Or which account is one to believe? A visiting group of American academics sponsored by the Latin American Studies Association (LASA) – opposed to Reagan and generally sympathetic to the Sandinistas – found the elections an "impressive beginning." Whatever the FSLN's "abuses of incumbency," they "did not cast doubt on the validity of the electoral process." The same general view was taken by Lord Chitnis, a British Liberal, who wrote his own report. This was not the impression of the Dutch official observers or of many US reporters who were there, nor was it my own.

In the *Los Angeles Times* Dan

*The voting age was lowered to sixteen in February 1984. According to Douglas W. Payne's *The Democratic Mask*, the Sandinistas commissioned a secret survey by the Strategic Institute of Spain which showed they would obtain 35 percent of the vote if the voting age remained at eighteen, but that the vote would increase significantly if the voting age were lowered to sixteen. See also Dennis Volman's article on the effects of lowering the voting age in *The Christian Science Monitor* (March 2, 1984).

Williams reported widespread rumors "that people who did not vote would be black-listed for government jobs, passports and other benefits." John Preston of *The Boston Globe* wrote that some Nicaraguans, "in defensive whispers," told of "fears and aggravations for those who didn't want to vote." The Dutch observer team "repeatedly heard people remark that they did not want to vote but feared that to abstain would be interpreted by the CDS as support for the counter-revolutionaries."[1]

I heard similar stories. Members of artisan cooperatives in Masaya and Diriamba told me that they felt obliged to vote because the government controlled the distribution of leather and other supplies they badly needed. Adolfo Evertz, the candidate for vice-president of the Marxist-Leninist Nicaraguan Socialist party, told me that the Sandinistas had "prepared a campaign to confuse and frighten people. The poor were convinced that if they did not vote they would have problems with their ration cards and jobs." In a highly publicized speech before a huge rally closing the campaign, Daniel Ortega warned: "The only ones who will not vote would be the enemies of Nicaragua, the traitors, the turncoats, and will expose themselves to the fury of the people at the moment of [US] intervention."

The LASA report claims that on election day "voter turnout was heavy." John Preston of *The Boston Globe*, one of the most experienced American reporters in Central America, reported that "in some key cities, lines had dwindled to nothing by 10:00 AM." The greatest display of enthusiasm I saw was at the Hotel Intercontinental, where "international observers" boarded government buses to visit polling places. According to the official Dutch report:

> A certain confusion arose because of the presence of official and non-so-official observers, i.e., private individuals and groupings who had been invited by the Nicaraguan Government but could not be regarded as representatives of foreign governments or parliaments. Some, who acted more in the guise of performers than observers, were prepared as soon as they were off the aeroplane steps to make all kinds of statements about the nature and the exemplary functioning of the Nicaraguan elections, which could give rise to some embarrassing situations for the official observers.

In the eleven voting places I visited in Masaya, Monimbo, and Managua, the turnout averaged 40 percent. Voting appears to have been lighter in outlying districts. In small rural villages, residents later told me that between 20 and 35 percent had voted. A Socialist party politician told me that a concerned Soviet diplomat summoned a party leader to the embassy residency Sunday afternoon to ask why so many Managua polling places were desolate by 3:00 PM. In the late afternoon there was a small flurry of voting activity after Sandinista activists made house-to-house visits in many neighborhoods.

After nine days the official results were announced: nearly 1.1 million Nicaraguans had voted, a turnout of 75 percent, with 67 percent voting for Daniel Ortega and 64 percent for Sandinista National Assembly candidates. Sandinista officials, who had earlier publicly anticipated a 90 percent turnout, predicted 80 percent just before the elections. At that time, a Sandinista National Assembly candidate had added that if the Sandinistas did not win 80 percent of the turnout "we will have to reconsider our methods and the quality of our party members."

By their own count the Sandinistas received only 47 percent of the registered votes – against a majority consisting of those who abstained, annulled their ballots, or voted for the opposition. The PSLN, in any vote, still has support among public employees, peasants who have benefited from the agrarian reform, and young activists. But Rafael Solis, the PSLN party official in charge of the elections, frankly acknowledged that "the results show that we have problems in some areas. A significant number of Nicaraguans obviously do not understand or support what we are doing."

There is no way of determining whether the official vote count was accurate. Manipulation of election results is traditional in Central America and certainly few Nicaraguans I talked to took the results literally. Those international observers who did not depart the day after the voting eagerly awaited disclosures of partial and final results. Like the numerous foreign observers in El Salvador's 1982 elections, they assumed they were attending a protracted "election-night vigil" in a tropical setting. Meanwhile Nicaraguan journalists, academics, and opposition leaders described the waiting period in terms more reminiscent of a smoke-filled room at a US party convention.

Leaders of two registered opposition parties (the PLI and the PSN) told me that the opposition parties had participated in a preelection agreement with the PSLN to allocate the votes. Conlon claimed that the PLI's portion would be reduced as "punishment" for seeking to withdraw from the elections. Several well-placed Nicaraguans told me that the Sandinistas' own factional fight affected the results that were announced. Radical Sandinistas who had opposed Ortega's nomination wanted his vote kept low so as to prevent his emerging as the Sandinistas' undisputed leader. The opposition party leaders I spoke to said the results would award the registered parties with enough votes to maintain themselves as a viable opposition but not enough to challenge the PSLN in the National Assembly. The elections, they argued, were held almost exclusively for international consumption, and the results would have to establish that Nicaragua was not "an Eastern European dictatorship," thus ensuring a continued flow of international assistance. The announced turnout, they predicted, would be high enough to declare victory over those who had dispatched advanced observation but not so high as to seem implausible in view of the visibly disappointing actual turnout.

No one produced documentary evidence of a preelectoral pact or of tampering with the ballots, nor have they done so during the last year.[2] Election poll watchers were present at over then 20 percent of the polling sites. However, Jaime Chamorro, the new editor of *La Prensa*, compiled a statistical analysis of the partial and complete official registration and election figures. (He was allowed to publish only a part of it.) He noted numerous discrepancies and concluded that the PSLN padded the registration count by 480,000. These votes, he argued, were later added to the PSLN election totals.[3]

[1] "Dutch government observers, "Report on the Elections in Nicaragua," p. 23.

[2] "There is no way to verify the official figures or the opposition's charges. In April 1982 I presented to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee my suspicions of "concerted inflation" of the vote count in El Salvador. Some members of the administration then suggested that I was following the "guerrilla" line." Less than a year later I could testify to the same committee that my suspicions had been confirmed by Rafael Molina, the first vice-presidents of El Salvador who, wanting to discredit the parties he opposed, told me in detail how the vote had been inflated. In Nicaragua, the convergence of state and Sandinista party organizations makes it unlikely that such information, if it exists, will ever be revealed.

4.

In the tradition of Somoza's demonstration elections, the November election results preserved the appearance of pluralism but ensured the Sandinistas effective control over the National Assembly. They did not hesitate to use it to consolidate their power and to cripple the opposition still further. What has happened since the elections has offered little encouragement for Willy Brandt's view that the elections were a "step forward." Shortly after the elections, prominent Church officials and opposition political, labor, and business leaders were prevented from traveling outside the country. Censorship of *La Prensa* increased dramatically (nearly 50 percent of its articles were soon being censored). *La Prensa*'s former editor Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, Jr., went into exile in Costa Rica. A Sandinista government source acknowledged to *The Washington Post* (December 3, 1984) that an "intimidation campaign" was under way. The *Post* also reported that two provincial officials of the Social Christian party were arrested shortly after the election, one charged with collaborating with the rebels. Later a prominent human rights lawyer, Roger Cuevara Mena, was jailed without charges and kept incommunicado for nine days, but the authorities usually packed for their reprisals inconspicuous mid-level opposition activists from provincial towns like Matagalpa and Chinandega.

Before the elections the Sandinistas agreed to a "national dialogue" among all political parties to take place after the elections. After the elections, the PSLN refused to hold any such meeting. In early January all Nicaraguan political parties – with the exception of the PSLN and the tiny ultra-left MAP (ML) but including the Nicaraguan Socialist and Communist parties as well as the Coordinadora – agreed a proposal to "renew the national dialogue." The November 4 elections, the proposal said, had not solved the country's main political problems: the "national economic crisis" had sharpened with mounting inflation, "workers' salaries have plummeted and poverty and indigence prevails among the masses." Only a renewed national dialogue could "restore peace, tranquility, and stability."

The Sandinistas asserted that discussion of such issues would occur only in the National Assembly. But supporters of the opposition parties that the Assembly would mechanically endorse Sandinista policy were soon confirmed. In February, against the vigorous objections of the parliamentary opposition, the Sandinistas and minority pro-PSLN factions in other parties pushed through legislation that granted Ortega broad emergency powers.

curtailed discussion of the budget, prohibited other discussion or reductions of defense spending by the Assembly, and virtually denied the minority parties their right to propose legislation." Socialist deputy Luis Sanchez said the legislation "violates the main principles" of the revolution" and "brings back ugly memories" of Somoza's rule.

When some of the parliamentary opposition proved refractory, the Sandinistas on March 7 imposed rules stipulating that all proposals, including the new constitution, must be approved by a 60 percent majority. That meant that even if the entire opposition walked out, the Sandinista delegation could continue to run the legislature and approve a constitution. A commission was formed to draft the constitution. It was composed of FSLN delegates along with docile members of the opposition, some of whom, opposition-party sources have claimed to me, are on the government's payroll. The president of the Social Christian party, Augustin Jarquin, said that the Sandinistas' evident intentions to dictate the constitution furnished "further proof that the FSLN does not intend to allow political pluralism." Other opposition leaders said the Sandinistas were fulfilling Bayardo Arce's vow to draft "a Red constitution."

On March 21 the National Assembly approved an internal statute granting broad powers to the executive. Virgilio Godoy said the rules meant that "now the National Assembly has more members but less power" than the defunct Sandinista-dominated Council of State. According to *The New York Times* (May 10), "opposition deputies ... said they no longer believed [the Assembly] could serve as a forum for serious debate." Under present rules all motions must be submitted well in advance to Sandinista representative Carlos Nunez, who can reject any proposal he considers "notoriously out of place." According to the *Times* report, "up to now nearly every bill has been approved in the exact form in which it was proposed by the Sandinistas." Another blow against pluralism was struck on March 6 when the Supreme Court upheld the government's decision to deny legal status to the traditional anti-Somoza Conservative party. In May the PLI was again prosecuted that it was causing polarization because of "excess membership." Finally, on October 15, Daniel Ortega announced the suspension of virtually all civil liberties, including the rights to assemble, to move about the country, to strike, and to publicly criticize the government.

Though the Sandinistas apparently had urged other countries to send high-ranking delegations to Daniel Ortega's inauguration on January 15, in contrast to recent inaugurations in Panama, Uruguay, and Brazil, Western Europeans sent lower officials. No Costaricans or other Latin American presidents attended nor did other Central American countries send delegations. Fidel Castro dominated the ceremonies. His presence was made particularly conspicuous by the absence of the other leading patrons of the revolution, former Venezuelan president and Socialist International leader Carlos Andres Perez. Declining an invitation to the inauguration, Perez wrote Ortega: "Those of us who believe we have done so much for the Sandinista revolution feel deceived because sufficient guarantees were not provided to assure the participation of all political forces."

There is bitter retribution for US policy in the Sandinista elections. They were no worse but no better than those we have sponsored for half a century in Central America. For decades we backed El Salvador's military regime and applauded "elections" in which the military party, the Party of National Conciliation, like the FSLN, controlled the state apparatus, the army, the police, and the election results, and routinely resorted to the mass intimidation to dominate the National Assembly.

The elections were a partial success for the Sandinistas. The enthusiasm of Cruz and the electoral abuses described in the American press sharply diminished remaining Sandinista sympathies in the US Congress, but the cautiously favorable report of the official observer of the Socialist International, Thorvald Stoltenberg of Norway, caused so many members of its members, especially those from West Germany, France, and the Scandinavian and Low Countries," when I expressed my own reservations to a leading member of the Socialist International who had just publicly endorsed the Nicaraguan elections, he replied, "But we had to endorse them. Reagan endorsed the Salvadoran elections."

The elections left much bitterness among the Nicaraguan people – not only toward the Sandinistas but toward the opposition as well. Many Nicaraguans who hoped the elections would help to resolve the national crisis, or at least to expose the Sandinistas' failings, criticized the opposition forces for not having participated in the campaign, even under unfavorable conditions, and for their disunity and indecisiveness. They felt Cruz had let himself be manipulated by the right wing of the Coordinadora instead of capitalizing on the moral authority he gained from the rallies in Chinandega and elsewhere. Had he persisted, he might have posed a strong challenge to the regime. The Cruz campaign, too often conducted through behind-the-scene negotiations rather than through direct appeal to the Nicaraguan people, left the opposition without a coherent political structure.

After the elections the dissident Nicaraguans withdrew what confidence they had from the Coordinadora. The undisputed political leader of the opposition has become Miguel Obando y Bravo, the archbishop of Managua who was made a cardinal last spring. When he returned from Rome in June he was greeted by huge crowds, and many thousands have come to hear him as he has held masses throughout the country. He has implicitly criticized the regime by calling for a "national dialogue" and by asserting that the Nicaraguan people "want neither capitalism nor communism". (The popular responses to Cardinal Obando – along with recent protests organized by Christian Democrats, Socialists, and Communists against bonus cuts – were apparently the main reason for the regime's emergency decree of October 15.) During the year following the elections, thousands of Nicaraguans left the country, some to join the ranks of the rebels, whose ranks quickly grew. In a later article I shall examine the rebels and their entanglement with US politics.

This is the first of three articles on Nicaragua.

"The summary of the report released by the Socialist International in London nevertheless states: "With a war going on in the country it is understandable that censorship may be necessary on military and security matters. This, however, is no excuse for censoring news and statements relating to the elections, which did happen. This is to be regretted."

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(LETTER TO THE EDITOR)

The Nicaraguan Elections: An Exchange

To the Editors:

Mr. Leiken is correct in redirecting attention on the 1984 Nicaraguan elections [*NYR*, December 5, 1985], not only because "they remain poorly understood," but also because the legitimacy of the present regime is dependent on an evaluation of what happened as part of the electoral process. Mr. Leiken's interpretation, however, is singular among those who were present in Nicaragua for the purpose of preparing a serious evaluation of the elections. Even the conclusions of the official Dutch observers, relied on by Mr. Leiken, are not supportive of Mr. Leiken's interpretation.

The report of the official Dutch observers deserves attention for two distinct reasons. First, Holland was the only Western government to send official observers to Nicaragua for the elections. Second, the two observers designated by Holland have considerable experience in Central American affairs, are sensitive to human rights issues, and had served as election observers in El Salvador several months earlier. Thus, they were in a position to compare the fairness of the 1984 elections in El Salvador and Nicaragua.

The Dutch observers concluded that the elections in Nicaragua were "more open than in El Salvador, in the sense that more people were able to take part: the opposition did not fear for their lives." Moreover, contrary to the implications in Mr. Leiken's article, the Dutch observers found no irregularities either in the voting or counting process.

The Dutch observers criticized several aspects of the Nicaraguan electoral process, as did the observers sponsored by LASA and those co-sponsored by my organization, the International Human Rights Law Group. Nonetheless, none of the observers present in Nicaragua, including Mr. Leiken, provided any credible evidence of vote tampering, either to increase turnout or to change the results.

Mr. Leiken assumes that the lack of crowds at polling sites suggests voter turnout lower than the 75 percent reported by the Supreme Electoral Tribunal. In fact, the lack of crowds was the result of a well-designed electoral system, which limited the number of voters assigned to polling sites and distributed the polling sites throughout the country. Nicaragua's administration of its electoral process, from registration through the counting of the ballots, should serve as a model for its neighbors, particularly El Salvador and Honduras.

Admittedly, no electoral system is fraud-free. The role of outside observers is to evaluate whether there are sufficient checks in place to prevent such infamous practices as ballot-stuffing, double-voting, ballot-burning and irregular counting of the ballots. In Nicaragua, such checks were present; the fact that opposition parties did not take advantage of the access to polling sites cannot be blamed on the election administrators or the FSLN.

Recent developments in Nicaragua are cause for concern. The political opening that existed at the time of the elections may be closing. Yet those developments do not establish the unfairness of the elections, any more than a military coup proves that a preceding election was unfair.

Larry Garber
International Human Rights Law Group
Washington, D.C.

Robert Leiken replies:

Mr. Garber does not give an accurate account of the Dutch report I cited in my article. The Dutch observers found that Nicaraguan opposition parties were rendered "totally inactive" in the years preceding the elections by Sandinista "emergency" legislation and that

> the parties were not able to organize and regroup their forces at grassroots level.... Moreover, the lack of press freedom coupled with the all-pervading image of the FSLN [Sandinista National Liberation Front] was hardly conducive to the building-up of party systems across the country. [p. 24]

Thus their report explicitly found the request

of the CDN (the opposition coalition led by Arturo Cruz) for a postponement of the elections—the central issue in the negotiations between the Sandinista government and the opposition, and the only remaining one when talks broke down—was "in our opinion justified" (p. 34). Indeed the Dutch wrote that there should have been "a period of at least six to nine months" for parties to organize "with much greater freedom of expression, permission for meetings, etc., preceding an election campaign lasting a few months." In this perspective, the opposition's final appeal for a sixty-day delay was reasonable and moderate.

The Dutch observers considered the identification of the Sandinista party with the state, whereby the party frequently takes "unilateral decisions regarding state institutions such as the ruling Junta and the Council of State, the composition of the cabinet, the Supreme Electoral Council, etc." to be the relevant "background for understanding the hesitation of other parties to take part in the elections" (p. 22). The Dutch also reported widespread fears that abstention would be "interpreted by the CDSs as support for the counterrevolutionaries" (p. 23). According to the Dutch, the CDSs (Sandinista Defense Committees) are district committees which "form part of the fabric of the state" (p. 42). The Dutch report concluded that the absence of the CDN and the attempted withdrawals of other opposition parties produced "a sluggish campaign in which political choices were limited" (p. 26).

These statements by themselves justify my comment that the Dutch observers did not share the view of the LASA report that Sandinista "abuses of incumbency...did not cast doubt on the validity of the electoral process." Contrary to Mr. Garber's opinion, the Dutch report was quite "supportive of Mr. Leiken's interpretation." It is Mr. Garber who distorts the Dutch report. He cites one element of their comparison with El Salvador, but ignores their observations that "in comparison with El Salvador" the Nicaraguan election climate "was lethargic and the mood one of resignation" and that there was a more "competitive atmosphere" in El Salvador (pp. 25–26).

The report holds that in both countries significant groups were excluded: in El Salvador the left was excluded and the "battle was between the center and the right." In Nicaragua

> The situation was that in effect only parties of the left took part in the elections, and the fact that there were no great differences between these parties engendered a certain sluggishness in the electorate. [p. 23]

The Dutch observers in fact would seem to support my view that the Nicaraguan elections were "no worse but no better than those we have sponsored for a half a century in Central America."

It would be foolhardy, however, simply to "rely on the conclusions" of any election report including the reports of official observers. The Dutch observers forthrightly acknowledged that governments invite foreign observers who they expect will legitimize their elections, hoping in this way "to influence public opinion" (p. 21). As I indicated in my article other Western and Latin American governments refused requests for observers precisely because official observers imply de facto legitimization. The Dutch government has been the most consistent supporter of the Sandinistas in Western Europe, contributing annual aid of about $20 million. I found it striking that the only official delegation—one whose view of the revolution is quite sympathetic to the Sandinistas—recognized so many serious flaws in the electoral process. While I agreed with most of their conclusions, I found one of them misleading: the observers found an "absence of irregularities in the processing of the election results" on election day and thus concluded that the "outcome was that the Frente [the Sandinistas] won a clear majority. The legitimation of the regime is thus confirmed."

This conclusion seems unjustified in the light of the Dutch observers' own observations on the justice of the opposition's request for a postponement, the coercive use of the state apparatus, and the censorship of the press, among other criticisms. Moreover, the Dutch observers left Nicaragua two days after the elections and were not present during the long counting period.

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The handling of the vote count struck some Nicaraguans (such as the staff of *La Prensa*) and foreign correspondents (such as Patrick Oster of the Knight-Ridder newspapers) as peculiar. In the ten days between the election day and the announcement of the official count, partial tallies were released by the Supreme Election Council on several occasions. Each succeeding count augmented progressively and disproportionately the average number of ballots cast per voting precinct counted. This was one of the reasons for the suspicion that the total was being inflated.

While I made it clear that such allegations remained unproved, I reported in my article the misgivings of many Nicaraguans, including opposition party officials, about the validity of the vote count. These observations did indeed take into account the large number of polling sites or precincts. Foreign correspondents, leaders of opposition parties and the editor of *La Prensa*, Jaime Chamorro, calculated the number of voters, the number of precincts, the number of polling booths and tables at each site, and the average time necessary to vote, and estimated that to accommodate the announced number of voters, the polling booths would have had to be open for seventeen hours. In fact, few precincts had lines after ten or eleven in the morning and polls were open for no more than eleven hours.

According to the official tally 75 percent of registered voters cast ballots. However, during the July registration, with an approximately equal number of polling sites and procedures lasting about the same time, it took four days to register the voters. Virtually all Nicaraguans I interviewed said that, nonetheless, registration lines were longer for the first two days than the lines on election day. (The opposition coalition participated in registration.)

On October 15 the Supreme Electoral Council (CSE) announced that about 1.1 million Nicaraguans had registered. Later, however, the CSE announced that the number was "erroneous" and corrected it to approximately 1.5 million. Chamorro wrote that he believed the

'a 400,000 were created to be drawn upon ...ase the CDN participated. In the absence of the CDN, he wrote, the votes were distributed to the various parties in accordance with a pre-election agreement. As I wrote, leaders of two opposition parties told me that they were party to such a pact. These ballots, Chamorro alleged, were added to the vote count in progressively larger batches throughout the "counting" period, thus providing for Chamorro an explanation for both the length of the vote counting period and the uneven partial results.

Again, in Chamorro's view, those discrepancies could not be rationalized by assuming that the small precincts reported first. Such an argument is unconvincing precisely because (as Garber correctly points out) the large number of precincts limited the number of voters at each one and thus there were relatively minor discrepancies in their size. The number of voters at each site was about three hundred, and in Chamorro's words, "to count seven hundred ballots only takes an hour more than two hundred."

As I stated in my article "no one produced ...cumentary evidence of a preelectoral pact or ...tampering with the ballot" and I know no way "to verify the official figures or the opposition's charges." As in the case of El Salvador in 1982, where there was no documentary evidence either, I reported the misgivings of many citizens about a possible "contrived inflation of the results."

Vote tampering could have taken place without the knowledge of observers at at least three points: at unobserved times in irregularly observed polling sites, at unobserved polling

sites, or during the subsequent, central vote count. The best guarantee against such tampering would have been the continued presence of opposition observers. The Dutch observers did not agree with Mr. Garber's conclusion that the absence of such observers from the small opposition parties that did participate "cannot be blamed...on the FSLN." They take a far more comprehensive view of the electoral process. After commenting that the period allowed for parties to organize was "much too short," and that there should have been "much greater freedom of expression, permission for meetings, etc." the Dutch observers go on to say,

> In the present system, it was inevitable that splinter groups would form, most of them identifiable to a certain extent with the FSLN. Result: large-scale confusion, which is reflected in the absence of "fiscales"—party observers—during the elections. [p. 34]

Mr. Garber argues that "recent developments causing 'concern'"—i.e., the Sandinistas' October crackdown on trade unions, political parties, and the Church—do not cast doubt on the elections any more than a subsequent "military coup proves that a preceding election was unfair." Here again the Dutch observers have a different view: the elections would be significant, they wrote, if they contributed to the revolution's stated objectives of pluralism, mixed economy and non-alignment. "Only time will tell whether the new government adheres to these points."

Indeed Mr. Garber contradicts the very report he helped to draft for the International Human Rights Law Group. That report, co-sponsored by the Washington Office on Latin America, a group sympathetic to the Sandinistas, found the electoral process "meaningful" because it "permitted a political opening.... This opening, however, must be built upon if it is to have long-term significance."

The recent Sandinista repression has included increased censorship, the arrest and questioning of more than one hundred political, labor, and religious leaders, and the confiscation of a church newspaper. These "emergency measures" were decreed by the president put in office by the elections of 1984 and were given legal authority by legislation virtually suspending civil liberties including freedom of expression, of the press, and of movement, and the rights to assemble, to form labor organizations, and to strike. Such legislation was pushed through the very National Assembly that was produced by the elections (and was further emasculated by the Sandinistas). To compare the repression now to a military coup overthrowing a civilian government seems sadly sophistical. The elections were advertised as a "political opening," but when that "opening" has proved illusory, we are told that the subsequent repression is irrelevant to a judgment of the elections' legitimacy.

Far more forthright and accurate is the view of Comandante Bayardo Arce, in his "secret speech" of May 1984, which I cited in my article: by approving the elections, he said, liberals and social democrats would provide "the arms" for "terminating this whole artifice of pluralism...which has been useful up to now, but has reached its end."

AN ALTERNATIVE POLICY FOR NICARAGUA

I. Summary

The Reagan administration's policy toward Nicaragua is one of weakness and ineffective bluster. Rather than preventing a second Cuba, it leads inexorably toward one. Rather than making the use of American troops unnecessary, it will, if followed to its logical conclusion, almost certainly culminate with U.S. military involvement. Rather than "containing" a Marxist regime, the Reagan policy leaves it unfettered and enhances its international standing. Far from being the tough, resolute approach portrayed by the President, present policy is one of confusion and ineffect- measures which detract from, rather than enhance, our image as a great, self-confident power that knows how to protect its interests with a minimum of force.

The United States has legitimate concerns in Nicaragua and is right to be suspicious of Sandinista intentions. Present policy, however, does not effectively address those concerns or advance sensible U.S. objectives. The most urgent U.S. aims should be: 1) to prohibit the establishment of any Soviet or Cuban bases; 2) to bring about the withdrawal of foreign military personnel; 3) to halt all cross-border support for guerrillas and other subversive groups; and 4) to place a ceiling on military establishments so that no one country, Nicaragua or any other, be in a position to threaten its neighbors. Beyond these security-related objectives, the United States should also want to promote pluralism, human rights and economic well-being in the area.

None of the objectives outlined above is served by present policy. The Administration speaks in cliches of "supporting democracy" and "stopping communism," but it has not been able to explain in over three years time how funding the contras accomplishes those purposes. In fact, of course, it does not. Funding the contras is more a public relations gimmick than a policy. The contras do not have the capability to overthrow the Sandinistas, nor has their war against the latter advanced any of the U.S. objectives outlined above. Quite the contrary, thanks to present U.S. policy and the activities of the contras, there are more Cuban advisers in Nicaragua now than four years ago, a closer military relationship between Managua, Havana and Moscow, and greater regional tensions.

In addition to being ineffective, moreover, present U.S. policy toward Nicaragua violates international norms, is inconsistent with our traditional values, divides rather than unites the U.S. body politic and is not supported by our allies. No major government in the world supports our clandestine war against the Sandinistas. No government outside Central America

supports our economic embargo against Nicaragua. Rather than upholding rule of law, present policy undermines it.

What the United States should be doing is to bind and restrain the Sandinistas through verifiable, international agreements so as to achieve all our security-related objectives and most of the others as well. This could be done. The Sandinistas have recently reiterated that as part of a regional accomodation inspired by the Contadora process, they would commit themselves not to permit any foreign bases on their soil, to send home Soviet and Cuban military personnel, to halt any support for guerrillas operating in other countries and to place restrictions on the force levels and weapons of their armed forces. The United States would not simply trust the Sandinistas to abide by these agreements. Of course not; rather, there would be means of verification and if the Sandinistas violated the agreements, the United States and other OAS countries would be in a position to take measures against Nicaragua under the provisions of multilateral agreement and in full accordance with international law. By working through international conventions, the United States would be upholding international law and at the same time achieving our objectives in the area. That would be a tremendous improvement over present policy which neither upholds rule of law nor achieves U.S. objectives.

A change of policy is urgently needed. However it has from time to time attempted to disguise it, the Administration's present approach is one of trying to bring about the ouster or capitulation of the Sandinistas by force. This will not succeed unless the United States uses its own armed forces, with all the risks and consequences that implies. Yet, we do not have to oust the Sandinistas to secure our objectives; they can be achieved through multilateral diplomacy resulting in the sort of verfiable agreements outlined above. So far, however, while rhetorically supporting the Contadora process and other diplomatic openings, the Administration has in fact done everything it could to undermine them. As its objective has been to get rid of the Sandinistas, it has had no interest in any regional settlement which would have left them in power. Quite the contrary, it has sought to prevent any such accomodation. If the Administration holds to its present positions, the Contadora process cannot succeed -- which is just what the Administration wants. It would thus be free to pursue its confrontational policies unencumbered by the compromises implied by negotiations, and since it is not a direct party to the Contadora process, it would avoid responsibility for the failure of that process.

The key to reversing that equation and opening the way to effective diplomacy, and the point on which opponents of the present policy could usefully concentrate their efforts, is to bring about the direct engagement of the United States in the process of multilateral negotiations. The logic of this is

unassailable. If the United States feels such a strong responsibility for the outcome of the situation in Central America that it is willing to use force, then it stands to reason that it should also feel, and take, some responsibility for the outcome of the negotiating process. It makes no sense at all for the Administration constantly to emphasize how deeply interested we are in Central America, and how important are our security interests there, but at the same time to stand aside from diplomatic efforts to produce a peaceful solution. The United States should actively join the Contadora nations, the Central American states, and other interested parties, in a concerted effort to produce a regional accomodation satisfactory to all. If it does not, U.S. policy in Nicaragua will either fail or will lead to full-scale U.S. military involvement.

II. Contradictions and Confusion of Present Policy

The Administration complains that its policy is not understood, yet the Administration itself cannot explain how funding the contras is supposed to achieve our objectives; indeed it cannot even state clearly what our objectives are. It says one thing one day, the exact opposite the next. The President first denied (for example, in a letter to Senator Howard Baker on April 4, 1984) that he sought "to impose or compel any particular form of government there." Rather, he assured us, the purpose of the so-called "secret" war being waged by the contras against the Sandinistas was to interdict arms allegedly being shipped from Nicaragua to the guerrillas in El Salvador. Some three years later, however, not a single rifle or bullet has been interdicted. Since 1981, the Administration has been unable even to present any evidence to demonstrate that arms are in fact being moved from Nicaragua to El Salvador.

For their part, the contras themselves have always stated quite clearly that their objective was not to interdict arms but to overthrow the Sandinista government. Col. Enrique Bermudez, the ex-Somoza National Guardsman who is the contras' military commander, declared in 1984, for example, that: "It is not acceptable to carry out missions to interdict Cuban and Russian supply lines to El Salvador. We are Nicaraguans and our objective is to overthrow the Communists."

The President himself came around to acknowledging on February 21, 1985 that our purpose is indeed to get rid of the Sandinista government, at least as it is presently structured. What we want

to do, the President explained, is to make the Sandinistas cry "uncle" to the contras. In other words, all he was asking the Sandinistas to do was to surrender.

The President reversed himself again in order to win the support of moderates in the House prior to the June 12 vote. Thus, he assured Congressman Dave McCurdy that his purpose after all was not the "military overthrow" of the Sandinistas; rather, he said, he intended to pursue political rather than military solutions in Central America. In fact, however, the President immediately moved in the opposite direction, edging closer to direct military action against Nicaragua and on July 22 rejecting an appeal from the Contadora foreign ministers to resume negotiatins with Managua. Although in a letter to the Senate on April 23 the President had said the intended to do just that, i.e., reopen talks, on July 22 he flatly refused.

Whatever the Administration's real objective in funding the contras, it is not likely to be achieved. As indicated above, the contras have interdicted no arms. They do not have and will not have in the foreseeable future the capability to defeat the Sandinistas. Our former military commander in the region, General Paul Gorman, admitted as much to a Congressional committee on February 27, 1985.

The Administration sometimes suggests that its purpose is to pressure the Sandinistas into negotiating seriously. The record does not bear out such an assertion. The Sandinistas have over and over again offered to negotiate most of the issues which concern us. The Administration has consistently rebuffed these

overtures. An illustrative example were the draft treaties presented by Nicaraguan Foreign Minister D'Escoto for the consideration of the Department of State in October of 1983. Among other things, these documents provided for the termination of all cross-border support for guerrillas operating anywhere in the region, for the prohibition of all foreign bases, for on-site verification, and for the Contadora countries to act as guarantors.

As the documents addressed what the Reagan administration had said were some of our principal concerns, one would expect the Department of State to have carefully examined the draft treaties and to have discussed them throughly with the Sandinista government. Rather than that the State Department rejected them out of hand, Assistant Secretary of State Motley described them as "part of a campaign of deception."

A few months later, in February of 1984, the United States began illegally mining Nicarguan harbors. When this became known, it resulted in an international scandal, and forced the United States to reject the jurdisdiction of the World Court. President Reagan angrily claimed that such pressures had to be continued so long as Nicaragua continued its export of revolution.

The President offered no evidence that Nicaragua was exporting revolution, nor did he make any effort to explain why we had to take such measures to exert pressure over an issue the Sandinistas had already indicated their willingness to negotiate.

The Administration's decision to mine Nicaraguan harbors in a sense typifies its whole approach in that country. On each occasion that it has had the opportunity to achieve one or more of

our goals through diplomacy, it has ducked that chance and instead replied with a punitive military measure, which, invariably, has accomplished nothing.

The Administration has consistently claimed to support the Contadora process, but the record demonstrates the exact opposite. Diplomats from the four Contadora countries had worked on the treaties for over two years. On September 7, 1984, having incorporated the various comments and revisions suggested by the five Central American nations, they sent a final draft to the presidents of those states for signatures. Neither Honduras, El Salvador, nor for that matter, the United States, expressed any reservations. Quite the contrary. Between September 7 and September 21 the United States seemed enthusiastically to endorse the treaties, calling the final draft "much improved" over earlier versions. U.S. diplomats also predicted, with much head-shaking, that Nicaragua would never accept the treaties. Nicaragua, they said, was the obstacle to a negotiated solution.

But then, on September 21, Nicaragua suddenly announced that it would accept the treaties. Caught by surprise, the United States frantically reversed itself, finding objections to the treaties where it had seen none before, and pressuring Honduras, El Salvador and Costa Rica to demand further revisions, several of which were so obviously one-sided and unacceptable to the Nicaraguans as to stalemate the whole process -- which obviously was just what the Administration intended. By October, the National Security Council could say with obvious satisfaction, "We have effectively blocked Contadora group efforts to impose

the second draft to the revised Contadora Act." [International Policy Report (Center for International Policy, Washington, D.C.) June, 1981.]

However confused the Administration's explanations of its policies, and despite its occasional lip service to the need for diplomacy, the way in which it rejected the Contadora treaties and the way in which it has side-stepped all other diplomatic openings make it clear that its real intent is not to negotiate but to get rid of the Sandinistas by force. That, in essence, is its policy on Nicaragua: to remove the present government, by force if necessary.

III. NEED FOR A NEW POLICY

Few who advocate a new policy toward Nicaragua do so out of any sympathy for the Sandinistas. On the contrary, it is generally recognized that, while the Administration may exaggerate their negative qualities, there are those in the Nicaragua government who have little appreciation of or interest in democratic processes. Managua's relationship with Moscow and Havana, moreover, is closer than the United States, the other superpower, can be comfortable with. Further, Nicaragua's neighbors do, in prudence, have reason to be concerned about the intentions and capabilities of the Nicaraguan armed forces.

Nor is a new policy needed because the old one is too "harsh." The Administration is fond of saying that it is time to get tough with the Sandinistas, but in fact its policy neither effectively addresses legitimate U.S. concerns in Nicaragua nor advances

sensible U.S. objectives. It is a non-policy, one which eschews the track of serious negotiations but whose punitive measures are so halfhearted and ill conceived that they cannot possibly be effective. The contras can harass the Sandinistas, but they can neither bring about their overthrow nor achieve any of our more legitimate objectives, which are discussed below:

U.S. Objectives

(1) Prohibition of Bases. The most basic U.S. objective, for example, is to make certain Nicaragua is not used as a military platform by our adversaries in ways which might threaten U.S. security. Essentially, this means prohibiting the establishment of any Soviet or Cuban bases. No missiles must be positioned there; no bombers must fly out of Nicaraguan airfields; no submarines must operate from her ports.

Present policy does not prevent any of those things. The idea that funding the contras somehow prevents the establishment of such bases in almost laughable.

In the Cuban case, there has been since 1962 a U.S.-Soviet understanding which clearly prohibits the introduction of Soviet offensive weapons systems, i.e., the operation of submarines out of Cuban ports or bombers from Cuban airfields. There is no parallel convention covering Nicaragua. Nicaragua has signed the Tlatelolco Agreement which prohibits the presence of nuclear weapons. That Agreement, however, says nothing about other kinds of weapons. The Soviets, the Cubans, and the Nicaraguans may be inhibited by the expectation that the United States would react forcefully if they began to fly non-nuclear armed bombers from

Nicaraguan airfields, but there is no international agreement prohibiting such activity, and in the absence of one, there might well be circumstances under which they would be tempted, or would be desperate enough to try to bring in such weapons systems. The vagueness and confusion inherent in present policy, in short, open the way to an international crisis a la 1962. That opening ought to be closed.

(2) Removal of Soviet Bloc Military Personnel. Another U.S. objective must be the reduction of Soviet/Cuban influence and the removal of all bloc military personnel from Nicaragua. Present policy does not achieve that. Quite the contrary, according to the Administration's own statements, there are more such personnel in Nicaragua today than there were four years ago. This is not surprising. In response to our clandestine war against them, the Sandinistas, predictably, have increased their military ties with Moscow and Havana. Clearly, the idea that we can simply pressure the Sandinistas to reduce such ties does not work. To the contrary, the more we escalate the war, the greater will be Soviet/Cuban influence and presence in Nicaragua. The only way we could exert enough pressure to escape this self-defeating equation would be by going all the way, i.e., by bringing to bear as much military might as is necessary to defeat the Sandinistas and to drive them and their Soviet/Cuban allies out of Nicaragua. But since the contras do not and will not have that military capability, this would mean using our own armed forces to do the job. It would mean shedding American blood to achieve an objective we might as easily have achieved through effective diplomacy.

(3) Placing a Limit on the Size of the Nicaraguan Armed Forces. So that Nicaragua not be able to threaten its neighbors, or for that matter, so that no Central American country be in a position to threaten its neighbors, another U.S. objective must be to encourage restrictions on the size of armies in the region and the nature of their armaments. The Reagan administration often speaks in alarmist terms of a Nicaraguan buildup. Again, however, present policy does not preclude such a buildup. Quite the opposite, it may actually encourage it. The more of a nuisance the contras make of themselves, the greater will be the inclination of the Sandinistas to increase still further the size of their armed forces and the easier for them to justify this to world public opinion.

(4) Halting "Export of Revolution." There is no question that the Sandinistas supplied arms to the Salvadoran guerrillas in 1980 and the first few months of 1981. It is equally clear that this support was drastically reduced or terminated after the failure of the guerrilla offensive in January of 1981. Since that period, as stated earlier, the Reagan administration has not been able to present any tangible evidence of an arms flow. It is possible, nonetheless, that some such support is still being given -- though the quantities would have to be small. Certain other forms of support, moreover, almost certainly continue. The FMLN, for example, still operates a headquarters facility in Nicaragua.

The Reagan administration has grossly exaggerated the nature and degree of Nicaraguan support for the insurrection in

El Salvador, but to the extent that such direct support is still a factor, the United States must aim to close it off. Present policy does not do that. As stated, despite the Administration's earlier misleading statements, the contra operation was never designed to interdict arms. Further, the Sandinistas have on several occasions indicated their willingness to join in a regional settlement which would prohibit all cross-border support for guerrillas operating anywhere in the area. The United States has just as consistently rejected such overtures, even while insisting that its purpose is to halt "export of revolution."

(5) Promote Pluralism. Both because it is consistent with our own value system and because it would have the effect of muting tensions in the area and enhancing the well-being of the Nicaraguan people, the United States should of course wish to promote pluralism in Nicaragua. Far from doing that, however, present U.S. policy makes it less likely that pluralism will endure. By mounting an armed external threat, the United States gives the Sandinistas a justification for insisting on internal discipline and controls. The Administration's policy has so far tended to polarize Nicaraguan society in ways unfavorable to our interests. As the Reagan administration was moving to implement its confrontational approach back in 1981, democratic elements of the Sandinista government -- men such as Arturo Cruz and Alfredo Cesar -- as well as opposition leaders, expressed their concerns to our then-Ambassador in Managua, Larry Pezzullo. Such a policy, they said, would simply make things worse; it would undercut

democratic forces working to maintain pluralism and a mixed economy, and it would reduce U.S. leverage as well.

As Ambassador Pezzullo summed up the effect of the Administration's mistaken approach:

> "We were not unaware of the radical tendencies within the Sandinista government, but it was misleading as well as damaging to our own interests to label the whole structure Marxist/Leninist and to treat it as such. There were moderate forces within which wished to retain a democratic framework. Between the radicals and the moderates there was still, as of early 1981, a dialogue. It was very much in our interests to see that dialogue maintained. Taking an overly hostile position against the Nicaraguan government could only excite xenophobic fears within Nicaragua, thus almost assuring that the internal dialogue would be broken off. We did, and it was."

(6) Promoting an Internal Dialogue. As it is unlikely that peace could be restored in Nicaragua without some kind of dialogue between the government and the opposition, promoting such a dialogue must also be an objective of U.S. policy in Nicaragua. The present approach, however, is contradictory and cannot succeed in this. The Administration insists that the Sandinistas must negotiate with the contras. The contras, in turn, demand that the Sandinistas dissolve the National Assembly, annul the November 1984 elections and call for new ones. To understand just how unreasonable those demands are, one need only imagine how we would react if the guerrillas in El Salvador proposed the same thing to the Duarte government. We would doubtless call it a cynical, deceitful and totally unacceptable offer.

Dialogue is needed in both Nicaragua and El Salvador, but it is equally true that the way to such a dialogue cannot be through

the cancellation of elections already held, or by having the government in either country cry "uncle."

The Administration's formula for negotiations between the Sandinistas and the opposition, in short, really amounts to having the former surrender to the contras, and that they are never likely to do. In Nicaragua, as in El Salvador, the only way to bring about an internal dialogue is for the rebels to recognize the existing government as the legitimate government of the country.

The most compelling need for a new Nicaragua policy, then, flows precisely from the fact that the old one, the one followed by the Reagan administration since 1981, does not and cannot advance the U.S. objectives listed above. More effective alternatives are available; we should turn to them. We can no longer afford simply to drift and hope for the best. We need to map out a clear strategy for the achievement of our goals.

In addition to formulating a more rational and systematic approach to the attainment of specified objectives, there are several other considerations which militate in favor of a new Nicaragua policy:

--To end the debilitating domestic debate. Our Nicaragua policy has become a divisive issue in ways which are damaging to our nation and to the strength and unity of the free world. The Administration says one thing one day, the exact opposite the next. It claims Nicaragua is supplying massive quantities of

arms and ammunition to the Salvadoran guerrillas, but can produce no evidence of that flow. It cannot state clearly what its objectives are or how it hopes to achieve them. All this leads to an increasingly acrimonious debate which undermines the confidence of the American electorate in the veracity and good sense of their leaders. Further, for any policy to be successful, it must have the support of the American people. The present policy, for good reason, does not enjoy such support.

What we need is a policy which cuts across the lines of argumentation, which is credible, and can enjoy bipartisan support. We need a policy, for example, which proceeds from the assumption that whether Nicaragua is or is not supporting revolution in El Salvador, it should not be, and which then advances a clear strategy for making certain that it does not. We need a policy which, whether or not Nicaragua in fact constitutes a threat to its neighbors, aims to neutralize any threat that might exist; one which, whether there are 500 or 5,000 Cuban military advisers in Nicaragua, aims at bringing about their withdrawal.

That kind of policy the American people, and both sides of the aisle in Congress, could stand united in supporting.

--To regain the support of our allies. As damaging as the domestic debate has been the fact that the overwhelming majority of our friends and allies not only do not support our Nicaraguan policy but strongly oppose it. At a recent meeting of the Latin American Economic Conference (CELA), 24 Latin American countries condemned the U.S. embargo against Nicaragua. Only two governments in the world have expressed support for the embargo --

El Salvador and Honduras! Most of our NATO allies and most of the Latin American countries have expressed grave reservations with respect to our clandestine war against Nicaragua. The best the Administration can do to explain away this lack of confidence on the part of our allies is to invent messages of support from the Pope and to claim that other governments say one thing in public, another in private. To put forward such an explanation, however, is to suggest the Administration is willing to base policy on conversations whispered in the corridor. It certainly does not cover up the fact that we are increasingly isolated, with resulting damage to the integrity and unity of the Western alliance. We need a policy which reverses that, a policy which has the confidence of our allies and for which they can therefore offer their support.

--To be consistent with U.S. values. If the United States is to be true to its heritage and to carry out its historical mission, it must support rule of law and respect for human rights. Mining other nations' harbors in direct violation of international norms, refusing to accept the jurisdiction of the World Court, printing assassination manuals, and directing a clandestine war against a nation with which we maintain diplomatic relations are all actions which contradict everything we stand for. So too does supporting an armed force which has committed widespread atrocities against the civilian population and which is led by ex-members of the Somoza National Guard (virtually all the military commanders of the FDN are ex-guardsmen; the Administration's efforts to obfuscate that fact notwithstanding).

The United States has legitimate concerns and objectives in Nicaragua, but it must pursue them in a manner consistent with our own value system. The Soviet Union may violate international law and bully its small neighbors. The United States should not resort to such conduct, and can hardly expect the support of its allies if it does.

--To facilitate a regional settlement. While discussion of the problems we face in the other Central American countries is beyond the purview of this paper, it is clear that one of the most effective ways to end the turmoil and put things on a more positive track throughout the area would be through regional agreements, i.e., through an area-wide settlement such as that embodied in the draft Contadora treaties. It is also clear that the United States' obsession with getting rid of the Sandinistas represents a serious impediment -- if not an insurmountable obstacle -- to such a settlement. If the United States is to play a constructive role in working out regional agreements which will end the armed conflicts, assure our security interests, and at the same time promote pluralism and respect for human rights, it needs to change its approach drastically.

IV. ILLUSORY ALTERNATIVES

It is sometimes suggested that if the Contadora process could produce a peaceful solution, then the Administration would stop its secret war against Nicaragua. This is an illusion. There is a basic and unbridgeable contradiction between the goals of the Reagan administration and those of the contadora process. The

principal objective of the latter is to produce a regional accomdation acceptable to all, i.e., one which might well leave the Sandinistas in power. The bottom line of the Reagan approach, as has been discussed above, is to get rid of the Sandinista government. No set of treaties produced by the Contadora process which did not lead to the ouster of that government would be acceptable to the Administration. The Administration cannot support the Contadora process, as it claims it does, and at the same time press on with support for the contras. The two things are mutually exclusive. So long as the Administration pursues its present policies, the Contadora process cannot be brought to a successful conclusion. Yet, given that it is not a direct party to the negotiations, the Administration avoids any responsibility for their failure. Perhaps the only sensible way to break the stalemate is to bring the United States around to direct involvement in multilateral negotiations.

Bilateral negotiations between the United States and the Sandinistas are not likely to solve anything. The earlier round of talks illustrates why. The Administration, which really had no interest in working out a modus vivendi, simply put forward such one-sided and impossible demands that the Sandinistas could not begin to accept them. The United States then walked out of the talks saying the Sandinistas were not negotiating seriously and that they were "neglecting Contadora in favor of the bilateral discussions" -- though how the latter charge could possibly have been valid, given that the Sandinistas had accepted the Contadora peace treaty, was never explained.

V. A REAL ALTERNATIVE

Through an alternative policy emphasizing multilateral diplomacy we would have excellent prospects of achieving all our objectives in Nicaragua save one, and that is the overthrow of the Sandinista government. True, that we cannot bring about through negotiations. On the other hand, we must ask ourselves, if we could achieve all our other goals -- if we could halt any export of revolution, preclude the establishment of Soviet or Cuban bases, etc. -- why then would we need to overthrow the Sandinistas?

Representatives of the Administration often answer that question, at least in private conversations, by saying we must do so because we could never trust the Sandinistas to keep their word, and/or because when it comes to adhering to treaties, the Communist record in general is a poor one.

This represents a unidimensional -- and therefore skewed -- view. Some agreements have not been kept, but others have been. Those that have stood the test of time have generally been in the interests of both sides to keep and have been subject to verification procedures. The 1962 Kennedy-Khrushchev understanding comes immediately to mind. It worked. Indeed, in a region where the United States has a preponderance of power and where they operate at a disadvantage, it would have been foolish for the Soviets to violate it. They have tested its limits, and may again, but violate it they have not.

Agreements with the Nicaraguans could be equally effective -- so long as there were provisions for on-site verification, and for

the imposition of sanctions if the agreements were violated. Indeed, the threat of such sanctions -- and they could run all the way from minor economic penalties up to joint military measures -- could very well provide pressure to induce proper Sandinista conduct, pressure which the contras cannot generate. And the great advantage to the United States would be that if the Sandinistas should violate the agreements and so any of the things the Reagan administration now constantly predicts they will do -- ship arms to El Salvador, permit the establishment of a Soviet base, etc., -- the United States could then take punitive measures against them, but do so under the umbrella of an international agreement and with international law and public opinion on our side. We would be upholding international law, not violating it, as we are now. This would be an approach in keeping with our historical mission and sense of values, as the present approach is not.

How could such agreements be arrived at? As suggested above, so long as the United States holds to its present policy, there is no way the Contadora process can produce such agreements. What the United States has done so far is to wish the Latin American countries well in their diplomatic efforts but then to take actions which directly contravene those efforts. Diplomacy in the area can only succeed if the United States is willing to cooperate fully in its achievement. What is needed, then, is for the United States itself to become directly involved in multilateral negotiations aimed at producing a regional settlement acceptable to all.

Perhaps the best way to begin would be for the Contadora countries to convoke a regional peace conference in which the United States as well as the four Contadora countries and the five Central American countries would participate -- joined later perhaps by participants or at least observers from the four or five countries selected by the conference itself to comprise the Verification Committee.

The purposes of the conference would be very similar to those of the Contadora process, with some new embellishments. In effect, this would be an expanded and strengthened Contadora process. The United States should encourage conference participants to:

(1) Work out and have all five Central American countries commit themselves to upholding a series of agreements along the lines of those already produced through the Contadora process but going beyond them. See below for a list of the most important of these.

In addition to the agreements among the Central American countries, a number of extraregional countries, especially those which have been or may have been involved in supplying arms to various parties to the regional conflicts -- e.g., Cuba, Israel, France, the Soviet Union and the United States -- would sign a protocol committing themselves to honor the agreements and not to supply any military equipment prohibited by those agreements.

(Comparison with the draft Contadora treaties: The Contadora treaties also called for such a protocol.

The Reagan administration, however, opposed its inclusion, apparently on grounds that it might give an aura of legitimacy to Soviet/Cuban interest, and/or suggest a certain symmetry in U.S.-Soviet rights, in the area. But to the extent that such objections have any validity, they could be overcome by careful wording which recognized the United States' historical role in the region. The importance of having Cuba, the Soviet Union and others, bind themselves not to interfere in Central America certainly outweighs concerns over impressions of symmetry. The Administration cannot have it both ways. It cannot be taken seriously if it on the one hand expressed concern over Soviet and Cuban shipments of arms to the area, but on the other rejects an international agreement which would commit them to end such shipments.)

(2) To form a Verification Committee, ideally composed of four or five countries from outside the immediate area. Details of how the Verification Committee might operate would of course have to be worked out by the conference itself. One possibility, however, would be to have contingents of military and civilian personnel from the verification countries stationed in all five Central American countries with rights of immediate inspection to verify that all commitments under the protocols were being observed. This could include constant helicopter patrols along the borders, right of entry into most military posts, etc. If El Salvador,

for example, detected arms coming across the Gulf of Fonseca, it could have members of the Verification Committee on the scene almost immediately to investigate.

The Verification Committee also ought to have some means of investigating alleged violations of human rights in all five states and might provide the nucleus of personnel for international observance of elections in all five.

The cost of the Verification Committee and its operations would be considerable. The United States could play a key role by agreeing to put up the bulk of the funds needed. It would be in the interests of the United States to do so, first of all in order to facilitate solutions in Central America, but also because it would be cost-effective. It would cost less to maintain the Verification Committee than to fund the contras and maintain U.S. forces in Honduras -- to say nothing of the potential costs of a regional conflagration.

Canada, Brazil, Peru and Argentina would all seem to be good candidates for the Committee, in that they are likely to be acceptable to all sides. These are but suggestions, however; other candidates would doubtless be presented at the conference.

(Comparison with Contadora: The Contadora treaties provided for a Verification Committee composed of four outside powers plus one representative of the Contadora countries to be appointed by the other three. The

Administration objected to this and encouraged Honduras and El Salvador to insist that all five Central American countries be included on the committee. This would be totally unworkable, calling as it would on potential violators to verify their own misconduct. A far better solution would be to leave off the Contadora representative altogether and to have the committee composed of extraregional countries only, with each member having the approval of all five Central American states, plus perhaps an observer from the U.N. Secretary General's Office.

There was no provision in the treaties for the stationing of Verification Committee representatives in each country. This would be an improvement which would facilitate rapid and effective investigations.)

(3) To agree upon guidelines for imposing sanctions that could be imposed against any government which violated the agreements. One possibility would be to urge the formation of a Sanctions Committee composed of the Contadora countries, and two or three other states chosen by the regional conference. The Verification Committee, upon confirming that a state was in violation, could recommend action to the Sanctions Committee, which would then deliberate and call for appropriate measures against the offender -- measures which could range from joint censure to joint military action.

(Comparison with Contadora: The Contadora treaties did not provide for specific sanctions.)

--The Agreements. With respect to the agreements referred to in (1) above, most have already been put forward during the Contadora negotiations. The United States might wish to leave to the Latin American countries the initiative in raising them again. It should be U.S. policy to have them included, nonetheless; thus, if they are not pushed by the Latins the United States should be prepared to take action to see that they are addressed. For the process to be acceptable to the United States, the first four, which deal with security matters, would have to become the subject of agreements. We would wish to have the last three dealing with pluralism, human rights and internal dialogue, also become the subjects of agreements. But given that they deal with internal matters, our position regarding these three would have to be more flexible.

The issues are:

(A) Prohibition of all Foreign Bases. All five Central American countries would agree not to permit the establishment of any foreign military bases on their territory. Thus, Nicaragua would not permit Soviet or Cuban aircraft or naval vessels to operate from Nicaraguan airfields or ports, or for foreign troops to be garrisoned on her soil. In turn, all U.S. military installations in Honduras would be dismantled.

(Comparison with the Contadora treaties: The treaties prohibited all foreign bases in the region. Incredibly, in view of its oft-expressed concern over the establishment of Soviet or Cuban bases in Nicaragua, the Administration objected to this provision. The reason for its objection was simple: it did not wish to close or dismantle the bases it has established in Honduras or elsewhere in the region. This is short-sighted. The United States is so nearby that it could reintroduce its forces quickly if need be. It would certainly be worth dismantling our own advance bases in return for a committment from our adversaries that they would not attempt to set up any bases of their own -- a provision which we would of course, in prudence, constantly monitor.)

(B) Withdrawal of Foreign Military Personnel. Each country might wish to reserve the right to have a limited number of foreign military advisors attached to its armed forces. A balanced formula based on reciprocity would have to be worked out to fix such a numerical limit. Beyond that limit, all foreign military personnel would be withdrawn. Soviet, Cuban and other bloc military personnel would leave Nicaragua, their departure to be confirmed by the Verification Committee. In the same way, all above-ceiling American military personnel would be withdrawn from Honduras, El Salvador and any

other Central American country in which they might be located.

Military maneuvers which involved extra-regional forces would be prohibited inasmuch as they would, by definition, lead to the reintroduction of foreign troops.

Verification units would continue monitoring to make certain foreign military personnel were not returned.

(Comparison with Contadora: The draft treaties provided for the gradual withdrawal of all foreign military personnel except equipment technicians, and even the latter were to be restricted to "reasonable limits." The United States complained with some justification that leaving equipment technicians created too great a loophole. A better approach would be to establish a numerical ceiling to cover all categories of foreign military personnel.

The treaties also prohibited military maneuvers by foreign forces anywhere in Central America. The United States objected strenuously to this prohibition and had its allies demand that it be so watered down as simply to require that extraregional powers give notification before conducting military maneuvers in the area. This is insufficient and if held to would sink the whole Contadora process. The Sandinistas, understandably, are not likely to accept a settlement which allowed the

United States to continue large-scale military maneuvers on their border.)

(C) Place Limits on the Size and Weapons of the Area's Armed Forces. The five Central American countries, counseled by the Contadora countries, would sit down to agree upon ceilings on the size of their armed forces and restrictions on the nature of their weapons. Devising a formula acceptable to all sides would not be easy, but could be done, especially within the framework of a regional settlement with provisions to protect all sides against aggression.

Probably the most feasible approach would be to go for a freeze at more or less present levels. Although the Administration has for its own purposes made much of a "dangerous military buildup in Nicaragua," the fact is that there is even now rough parity among the three core Central American countries. Nicaragua's army is just about the size of the combined armies of Honduras and El Salvador. It has more tanks and artillery, but on the other hand the Nicaraguan air force has no first line combat aircraft at all, while Honduras and El Salvador have formidable airforces. Guatemala should not object to freezing at present levels and Costa Rica of course has no army. It would benefit most of all the five countries from the kind of joint guarantees against aggression that a regional settlement would provide.

(Comparison with Contadora: Under the draft treaties, within three months of signing, Nicaragua and the other Central American countries would have negotiated limits on arms and troop levels in the region. All would have agreed to an immediate freeze on new arms acquisitions until such time as these ceilings could be established.

The United States objected to deferring the negotiations until after the signing of the treaties. It also objected to the freeze on new arms, arguing that this would leave Nicaragua in a position of superiority. The latter objection has little validity. It could be overcome, nonetheless, by addressing the first. It would make sense to negotiate and establish the ceilings as part of a regional settlement, not subsequent to it. This should be one of the tasks of the Peace Conference.)

D) Termination of all Support for Guerrillas. All countries would commit themselves to refrain from providing any kind of material support to guerrillas or other groups attempting to overthrow the governments of neighoring countries. Such an arrangement means that Nicaragua would have to halt any continuing material support it may be giving to the Salvadoran guerrillas. It would also mean that Honduras, Costa Rica and the United States would halt any such support they may be providing to the Nicaraguan contras. Forces provided by the Verification Committee would vigorously patrol

borders and conduct immediate on-site investigations of any alleged trafficking in arms or other forms of material support. Sanctions in response to any confirmed violations would be heavy.

The presence of opposition forces in another state would be a more difficult question to resolve but could be handled with a rule of thumb that such forces would not be permitted in any way to operate from another country, but that their mere presence would not constitute a violation. Thus, while FMLN members might rest or convalesce in Nicaragua, the FMLN headquarters which has long operated there would have to close. Similarly, the contras might be permitted to reside in Honduras, but they would be prevented form raiding across the border into Nicaragua. To minimize the chances of this, they would probably have to be removed from the border area.

(Comparison with Contadora: The draft treaties forbade any flow of arms destined to individuals, irregular forces, organizations, or armed bands attempting to destabilize the governments of the signatory states. They would also have required the dismantling and forbidden the use of any installation or facility in support of such operations within a neighboring state. Thus, the Nicaraguans would have been required to close the FMLN headquarters facility in Managua.

The United States had no specific objection to this provision, but expressed concern over weak verification procedures. That concern would be answered with the strengthened procedures envisaged by the endeavor herein described.)

(E) Efforts to Promote Pluralism. This is an area that would have to be approached carefully, so as not to give the impression of violating the sovereignty of the countries in question. With this in mind, the five Central American countries might nonetheless be encouraged to commit themselves to the following actions as part of a regional settlement:

-- abolishment of censorship;

-- assuring the free activities of opposition parties, including their unrestricted participation in elections;

-- guaranteeing free and honest elections, with international observers.

(Comparison with Contadora: The treaties would have called upon all signatory states to submit an electoral calendar upon signing.)

(F) Respect for Human Rights. All five countries should also agree to:

-- free all political prisoners;

-- guarantee fair and open trials;

-- stop all arbitrary and illegal arrests;

-- halt all officially condoned assassinations,

death squad activities, cases of torture, and military excesses such as massacre of civilians.

-- commit themselves henceforth to comply with the obligations laid down in international legal instruments and constitutional provisions relating to human rights; also, to set in motion the constitutional procedures necessary to become parties to the international conventions listed in section 3, paragraph 11 of the draft Contadora treaties.

(Comparison with Contadora: Basically, the treaties concentrate on the last tick.)

(G) Internal Dialogue. In order to facilitate an end to the fighting in a number of countries, the regional conference might usefully encourage the governments in these countries, principally those of Nicaragua and El Salvador, to declare amnesties and to begin a dialogue aimed at bridging disagreements and incorporating the armed opposition in the political process.

(Comparison with Contadora: Under chapter II, Section 2, the treaties call for amnesties for and dialogue with the opposition in order to promote national reconciliation.)

V. Economic Development and Social Reforms.

It is understood that Central America's most basic problems stem from decades of economic underdevelopment, inequitable distribution of wealth, and repressive political systems. Steps such as those above hopefully would open up the political systems, end armed conflicts and ease tensions throughout the area. That, however, would simply be a prelude to -- and provide more appropriate conditions for -- a concerted effort to tackle the difficult tasks of economic development and social reform. In this endeavor the United States should take an energetic and generous role.

(From The New York Times, March 4, 1986)

IN THE NATION | Tom Wicker

A False 'Parallel'

President Reagan, citing parallels where none exist between the Philippines and Nicaragua, insisted to members of Congress in a White House meeting that "we stood for democracy in the Philippines; we have to stand for democracy in Nicaragua and throughout Central America and in our hemisphere."

This "parallel" denigrates the remarkable achievement of the Philippine people in their spontaneous uprising against Ferdinand Marcos. It is meaningless rhetoric if anyone thinks it stands simply for the dictatorial Pinochet Government, though Chile is "in our own hemisphere." And it's only one more excuse with which to pursue Mr. Reagan's pathological fixation on the overthrow of the Sandinistas — for which the [illegible] millions of U.S. taxpayers' money — to contend there are no parallels between the Philippines and Nicaragua.

In the former, a [illegible] dictatorship, corruption, [illegible] and murder, brought the population to the boiling point; whatever charges may be made against the Sandinistas, that cannot be said of them. By massive fraud and violence, the voice ignored and repressed for [illegible] the people expressed in a national election; whatever deficiencies may be found in the Nicaragua election of 1984, nothing in it remotely [illegible] the outrageous [illegible] Marcos.

Filipinos who rose in their wrath to rid their country of a tyrant were not organized and financed by the Central Intelligence Agency or "covert" funds from Washington, as were the Nicaraguan "contras." And when Filipinos had tied [illegible] they swept all before them, disclosing in a matter of days the rotten underpinnings of the tyrant's regime; but after five years of effort and millions of U.S. dollars, the contras have yet to take and hold a single town in Nicaragua, or to set off the smallest ripple of popular uprising anywhere in that unhappy country. Filipinos staged a Glorious Revolution; the contras wage a minor guerrilla war, paid for by U.S. taxpayers.

Now, the Administration — joined by Richard Lugar, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee — advocates the proposition that [illegible] in additional aid, $70 million [illegible] for military equipment, must be provided to the contras, or else they cannot force the Sandinistas to negotiate in the so-called Contadora [illegible] process.

Aside from the fact that, [illegible] withdrawal of U.S. aid, the contras have shown no ability to impose Mr. Reagan's will on Managua, this is a deceptive argument. Not only did the Sandinistas agree to accept a Contadora draft treaty in 1984, which the Reagan Administration promptly rejected; but just this year they also accepted a statement of principles, advanced by Guatemala and other nations in the region, as a basis for a peaceful settlement in Central America.

That statement called for the elimination of foreign military advisers from the region, including Cuban and Soviet-bloc personnel in Nicaragua. Is the Reagan Administration willing to negotiate on the basis of those principles? No — it insists that the Sandinistas must first negotiate with the contras, although the contras as yet have earned no right whatever to sit down as equals with the Sandinistas.

Secretary Shultz, meanwhile, continues to assert that Nicaragua subverts other Latin countries with arms and military training. If that is even partly so, it's all the more remarkable that the foreign ministers of the eight most important Latin nations — Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, Peru, Uruguay and Panama — came to Washington last month to urge Mr. Shultz and the Administration (a) to stop the contra war against Nicaragua, and (b) to negotiate directly with the Sandinistas. They got nowhere.

Nicaragua isn't like the Philippines

Mr. Shultz also has raised again the tired old threat of a "Soviet and Cuban base on the mainland of Latin America." There's no evidence that Moscow wants such a provocative base; but if it does, the U.S. could hardly stop it with $70 million in guns and ammunition to a ragtag guerrilla band with no real political support and fatal ties to both the C.I.A. and the hated Somoza regime the U.S. once backed. That the Soviet-base argument may be the Administration's strongest political medicine suggests how weak its case is.

Mr. Lugar concedes that the appropriation will have a tough time even in the Republican Senate. In the Democratic House, Representative David Bonior of Michigan, chairman of the Democrats' Task Force on Central America, has a good chance to defeat it. That's why the Administration is pulling out all stops. If aid to the contras is cut off, Mr. Reagan will have to turn to diplomacy, which means accepting the Sandinistas in some degree of power, or use U.S. forces to overthrow them directly. □